

A decorative border of stylized flowers and leaves surrounds the central text.

THE
IMPRESSIONS
OF
HEAVEN

BY
REV. W. H. MERRILL

250

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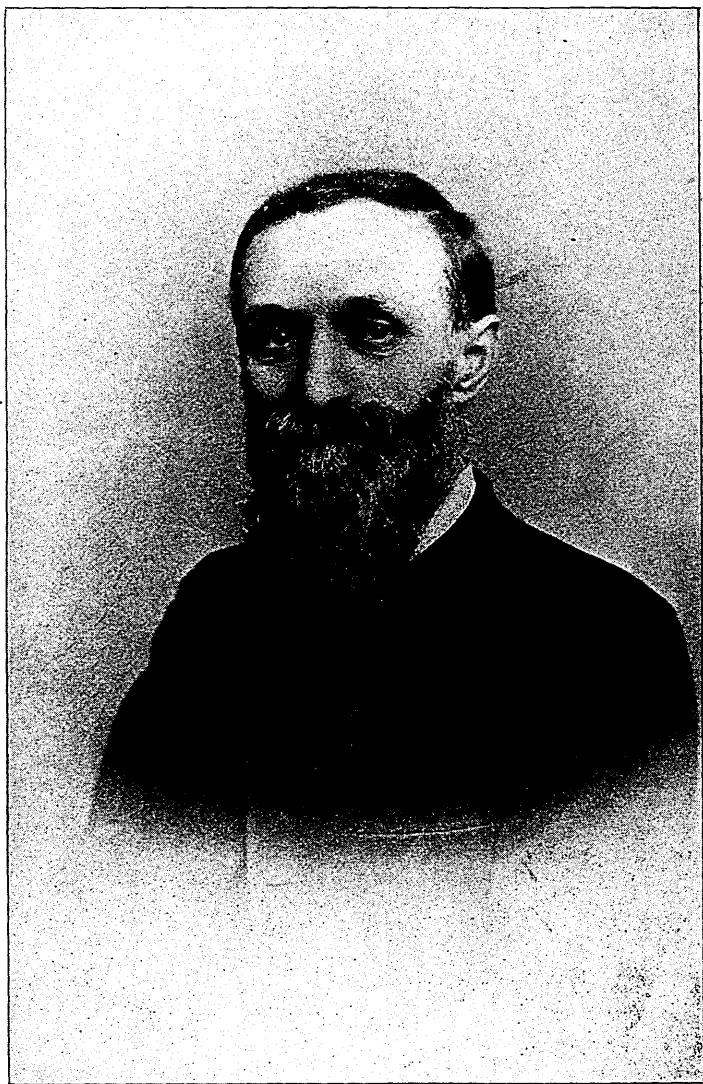
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REV. W. H. MUNNELL.

GLIMPSES OF HEAVEN.

Discourses Concerning the Way of Life

—AND THE—

HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS.

INSTRUCTING

Sinners to Enter by the Open Door

AND ENCOURAGING

SAINTS TO WALK WITH CHRIST EVERMORE

STENOGRAPHICALLY REPORTED AS

Delivered Under the Power of the Holy Spirit

By REV. W. H. MUNNELL,

LOUISVILLE, KY.

PHILADELPHIA:

JOHN Y. HUBER CO.

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PREFACE.

These discourses are not theological, nor yet exhaustive ; but merely descriptive and analytical of the life, service and sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ, designed to unfold the spiritual meaning of scenes, parables, types and allegories, in which, back of the letter, lies the divinest knowledge for those who have eyes to see Heavenly things, and to reveal the Way of Life, in the passage from the earthly into "the House not made with hands."

If they are not delightful stories of God's wonderful love for fallen men, and a happy portrayal of the shining letter and Heavenly mansions in Christ Jesus, I have missed my calling. But I am persuaded that His grace will carry these loving messages into many hearts, that they may shine forth evermore.

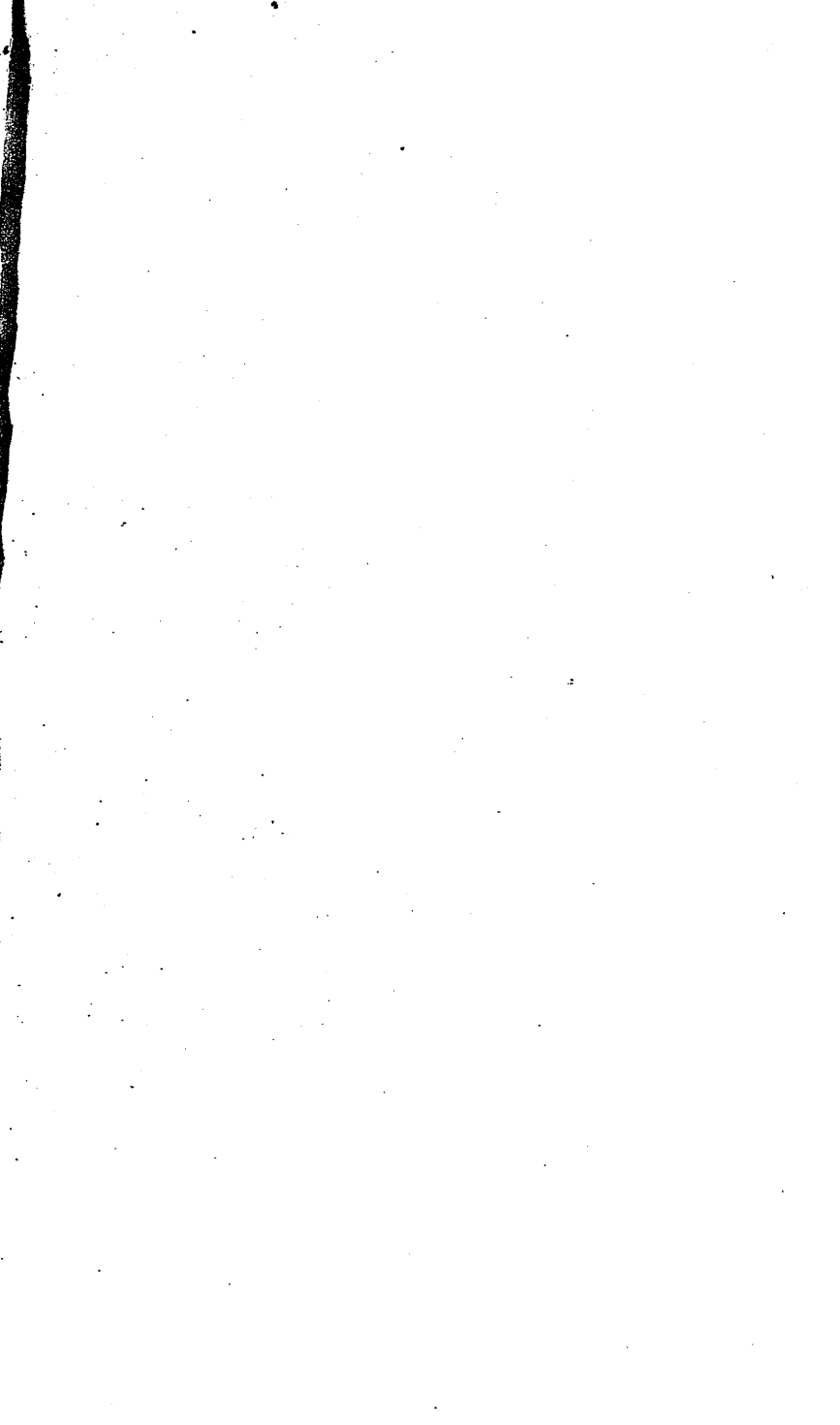
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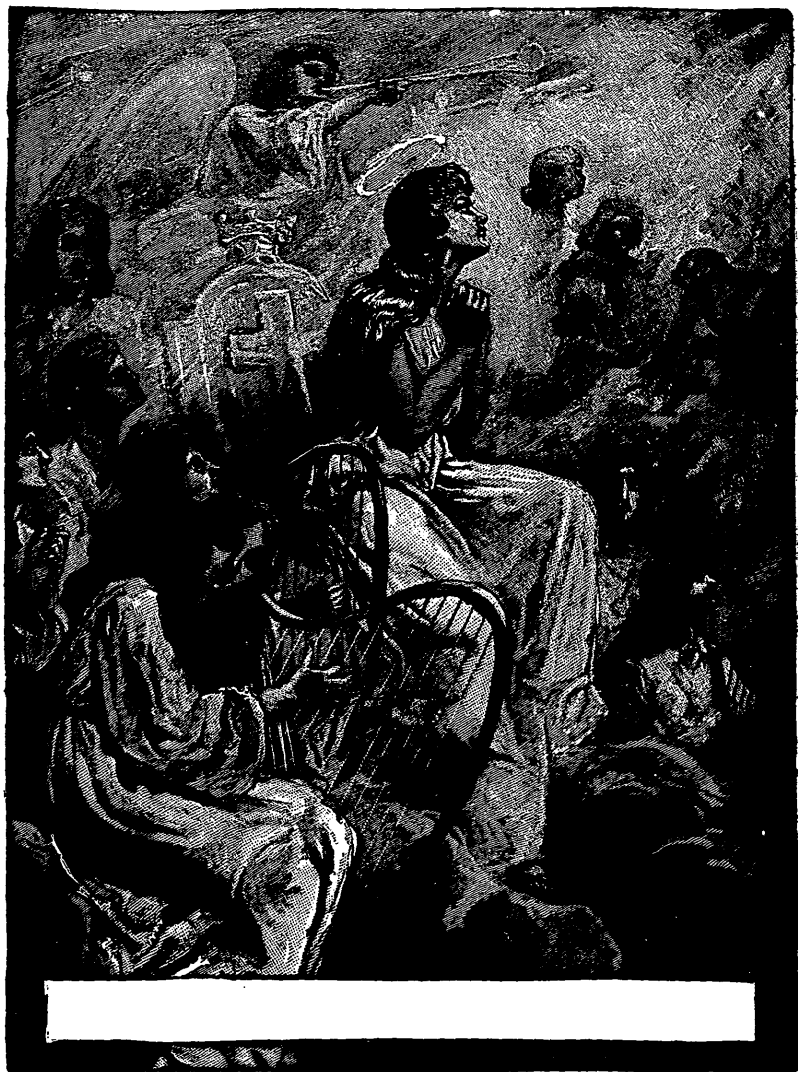
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A HEAVENLY VISION.

ENTERTAINING HEAVENLY VISITORS.

WHAT THE MAN OF FAITH SAW AND HEARD IN THE PLAINS OF
MAMRE, AS HE SAT IN THE DOOR OF HIS TENT,
IN THE HEAT OF THE DAY.

“And the Lord appeared unto him [Abraham] in the plains of Mamre, as he sat in the tent door, in the heat of the day; and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him; and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, and said: My Lord, if now I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant; let a little water be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree; and I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on; for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said: So do, as thou hast said.”—Gen. XVIII., 1-5.

Beloved, I call your attention, first of all, to the fact that he “lifted up his eyes and looked,” and saw what he did.

If he had not lifted up his eyes and looked, he never would have seen the Heavenly visitors, for they never intrude themselves; they never come where they are not expected.

Abraham sat in the door of his tent, in the heat of the day, not in the cool of the evening; not for comfort, but for meditation. He was waiting for the Lord, wondering when he would come, and what would be the manner of his coming. And, as his longing spirit went out, he felt constrained to

lift up his eyes and look, and, lo, he saw three wondrously fair and grand strangers near by him—standing there, and gazing smilingly upon him. Though puzzled that three should come when only one was looked for, he ran to greet them, bowing himself reverently toward the ground, and joyfully welcomed them.

Ah, my friends, what came to pass at the door of the tent, in the heat of the day, in the plains of Mamre, comes to pass again and again in our generation. Abraham expected to see the Lord, and was not disappointed. How he would manifest himself he did not know, whether by vision, or voice, or person. But he felt that the time was full come. He had an impression that stirred him divinely. In this light he lifted up his eyes and looked, and saw the glorious spectacle of the three Heavenly visitors. He had been waiting long years for the rapture of this scene. He was not afraid, nor startled, but he arose quickly, and bowed himself before them, and said, “My Lord”—not my *lords*. He knew the Lord when he saw him. He said unto him, “My Lord, since I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away.” No wonder they tarried, and accepted his hospitality. What a sweet invitation and reception it was!

First of all, brethren, we must be able to recognize the Lord Jesus Christ, not only in the sense that he fed five thousand men with five barley loaves and two small fishes; not only in the sense that he

steadfastly fixed his face toward Jerusalem, or that he laid down his own life and took it up again by his own power ; but, also, in the sense that he is ever ready to manifest himself unto those who are able to receive him. The ability to do this comes through the intense desire which leads one to wait *upon* him, and afterwards *for* him.

Abraham said, "My Lord." He met them, and knew which was Lord. We do not always know the Truth. But here was a man who, when three Heavenly visitors came whom he never had seen together before, knew them. He made no mistake. He hesitated not, but arose and "ran to meet them." He knew what to do. He bowed himself toward the ground. He knew what to say, and he said it. He said, "My Lord"—not my lords. He made not the mistake of Peter, on the Mount of Transfiguration, who, feeling called upon to say something, said: "Master, it is good for us to be here ; let us build three tabernacles ; one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elijah !" But he "knew not what he said." He spoke not by faith, but the will or the mind of the flesh. So a voice came out of the cloud to instruct him, and to correct his blundering, saying: "*This is my Son—hear him !*"

Ah, how easy it is to say the wrong thing, at the wrong time, and in the wrong place ! Thus we always do, and say, the wrong things when we are not *led* by the Holy Spirit. Now, Abraham made no mistake this time. He had been waiting twenty

odd years for this visitation, and he now knew "the Beloved" when he stood before him. It was not thus with Mary when she stood weeping before the empty tomb. The angel said unto her: "Why seek ye the *living* among the dead? He is not here. He is risen, even as he said!" After she had gone and told the other unbelieving disciples, she returned, and stood again near the tomb, weeping. The risen Jesus stood near her, but she knew it not! She had no eyes of faith to lift up and behold him.

She thought, when she saw him, that he was the gardener! She could not see for weeping. Then a voice came—a voice so loving and so familiar—"Mary." She could then turn and cry: "Rabboni; My Lord! My Lord!!"

O brethren, how important to be able to know the Lord when he speaks unto us! So, Abraham was waiting for the Lord. He had given up all effort to do anything to bring the promised son. He had said: "I will wait on my God. The Lord himself shall attend to it. He alone is able. I am nothing. Sarah is nothing. But the Lord will keep *his* word with me." So, when the Lord came, though attended with angelic beings, he knew him, and "wherefore he had come," and he fell on his face before him, and said unto him, "My Lord." There is not the mistake of the *three* tabernacles—there are not three Lords! He selected the right one, and addressed him. He said, "My Lord, if I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away," etc. The meaning is this:

“Since I have found favor in thy sight, pass not away until I have duly honored thee, and all is settled between us.”

This is the secret of a happy, triumphant Christian life. I declare unto you, brethren, that it rejoices the heart of the Lord when we find out his secrets; the secret of his presence! What rapture there is between two when they can appreciate each other in this Heavenly way! Thus came the Lord Jesus Christ to visit the Man of Faith—the man to whom the Lord *will* not “impute sin.” Oh, blessed is the man unto whom the Lord *WILL* *not* impute his sins! Above all things on earth, that gives me the most joy—that *my* Lord *will* *not* impute sin unto me. Then, when he comes and talks with me, I will make no mistake. Though I see him not, I will know his voice and feel his presence.

Now, Abraham not only knew the Lord, but “wherefore he had come.” That is better still. He invited them to tarry, and be entertained and comforted in the heart, saying, “For therefore are ye come to your servant.” And they were contented and pleased, and sat down under the shade of the tree. What a sight to see!

Straightway Abraham went into the tent, and said unto Sarah: “The *Lord* is come. Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal.” The tender calf was also slain and prepared, and bread, and butter, and milk, and meat were served under the tree, and “they did eat.” Thus did the Lord humor

and honor the Man of Faith. Not that he or the angels cared for or needed milk and bread, or butter and meat; but that faith is so precious on the earth. His prayer was granted in the feast, and in the eating, when perhaps it was not even the best thing to be done. I think sometimes the Lord has granted things even unto me, that were not the best he had for me, but to honor the faith too simple to be denied. Thus gratified, we are satisfied, not knowing he had something better in reservation. Oh, that we would always say, "Dear Lord, I do not want anything but that which you see fit to give." But we say it not, and oftentimes he lets us have our own way until we learn the better way, that we may explain our love unto him the best we can.

So it was with Abraham that glad day. He had his own way about the feast which he spread. But the unbelieving, or backslidden saint's bread and meat he will not eat. I remember a divine illustration of this. When the angel of the Lord came to Gideon, and said unto him, "Thou mighty man of valor, the Lord is with thee," he knew him not, and believed not, but went about to prove him with a meat offering. The angel consented to tarry while he should kill a kid and prepare it; and when he brought it unto him, he commanded that it be poured out on the rock whereon he stood. Then he touched the flesh, and unleavened cakes, with the end of the staff that was in his hand, and there arose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the

cakes, and then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight. The smoke of unbelief beclouded his eyes, but the fire out of the rock uncovered them, and, when the Lord was gone, he concluded that he had been blessed with the presence of a Heavenly guest.

Thus we see the difference between being Abraham and being Gideon. The one was a higher life saint; the other a lower life saint.

After the holy three had eaten, the Lord began to say unto Abraham, "Where is Sarah, thy wife?" This opens up the real object of this visitation. It was not to eat and drink, but to talk about Sarah. Abraham said, "Behold, she is in the tent." Ah, now the real meaning of the "wherefore" the Lord is come, is about to be revealed, and so the Lord said, "I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life, and, lo, Sarah, thy wife, shall have a son." So the uppermost thought in the Lord's and Abraham's mind is spoken. "Sarah, thy wife, shall have a son about a year hence." Oh, glad news! The son-promise had been given twenty-three years ago; but, now the *time* is also named. The ages knew it not; the world knew it not then; but there, by the tent door, in the heat of the day, in the plains of Mamre, the greatest of all questions was settled—the Son of Promise question is determined "according to the time of life." Of all things, this was what Abraham most longed to hear. The voice that spoke this Son-word to the Man of Faith

spoke salvation to all who believe on his name. And of all words it was also the word, the Lord most longed to proclaim, for he is but proclaiming his own birth as Son of Man! In this promised son of Sarah, the barren woman, he but prefigured, for the hope and faith of the Adamic world, his own birth of the Virgin Mary. But let us turn from this inexpressible wonder of the incarnate God for the salvation of believers unto the theme of this visitation to the Man of Faith, for in point of days he precedes the Son of Man.

Now, all this while Sarah has been listening behind the tent door and at the back of the Lord, to overhear what she could of the Heavenly talk with her husband. The Lord does not say, "Bring out Sarah thy wife, that I may see her." Have you noticed this? Have you ever even thought why? Well, if there was one thing on earth Abraham was touchy about, it was that woman. He did not like for any man to look on her. So the Lord had respect to this weakness. This is the mindfulness of him who told his disciples that the very hairs of their heads are numbered.

When Sarah overheard the Lord say that in less than a year she should have a son she could not contain herself, but "laughed within herself," thinking she was too old and dead for that ever to come to pass. The Lord, knowing her secret thought and derision, though unuttered, said unto Abraham, "Wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is anything too hard

for the Lord? She shall have a son, as I have said." Then Sarah knew—before she had not believed it—that her chief guest was the Lord. She had only scoffed when her husband had told her. She could now keep her hiding-place no longer, but came out and denied that she had laughed. She was now afraid, and told a "white lie" about it; but the Lord only gently chided her, saying, "Nay, but thou didst laugh." Now, when that son was born he was named *Isaac*, which means "laughter." The Lord then, in her presence, reaffirmed his promise of a son, "according to the time of life," and soon after bid them farewell, and took his departure.

Some years ago I was hailed on the street by a very solemn, long-faced church member, who said he wanted to ask me a question. "Very well," said I. "Can a Christian tell a lie?" "Certainly." He turned away, as if he thought I had said something ruinous; so I said, "Hold on, I want you to ask me another question." "What is it?" "Ask me this: 'Ought a Christian to tell a lie?'" He repeated the question, and I said, "Certainly not." Here we have Sarah, the mother of all the faithful, for she is the symbol of the Church, in derision of the truth, and telling a lie when caught. This only serves to illustrate the profound fact that no one is saved because he is good, but by FAITH in the Word. In this case the faith of Abraham stood for Sarah also; just as *our* faith in Christ, by and by, gives way to *his* faith in us. Once Isaac comes,

Sarah laughs no more at the idea of being fruitful unto the Lord.

In times past the Lord entered into a covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The men broke their side of it, but the Lord never broke his side. In the fulness of time God sent his own Son, of whom Isaac is the first type, to keep our side for us.

So these Heavenly messengers have come and told the Man of Faith that Sarah shall soon bear the Son of Promise. Thus we see that the backslider can in no wise defeat the Lord. Nothing is too hard for him. The barren woman shall have a son. Her laugh was only a witness of her own barrenness and the deadness of Abraham. In this she is also a type of the sinner, for her name was at first *Sarai*, but when the Lord returns to her she becomes fruitful, and then she is the type of those who have been born again—born of the Truth and the Spirit, that is, of the seed Christ Jesus, and the Spirit, which is God.

Peter's denial of the Lord in the hour of his passion, is only another witness of the barrenness of human nature, but the Lord did not go back on him. He only gave him a *look* as he passed, bound, through the pavement of the court of the temple. One compassionate look of love and pity, as much as to say, "Poor Peter, I am so sorry you had to go through this!" Brethren, that *look* broke his heart. You remember how he went out and wept bitterly.

As the Heavenly visitors arose up from the tent door and looked toward Sodom, Abraham went with them, "to fetch them on the way a little"; and the Lord was so pleased with him that he opened his mind still further unto him, and gave him a chance to make a heroic though unavailing effort to save his nephew Lot from the doom about to come down on Sodom and Gomorrah. Thus Abraham proved for himself again, and for us all, the utter helplessness of man for any good thing, except the *Lord* works for and in him.

Abraham returned unto his tent door, and, lo, the presence of the Lord still lingered there. All signs of discontent had been banished from Sarah's lovely face, and she greeted him with a warmth and grace that made them lovers of the spring-time again. It was not long until she had a secret sweet to whisper unto him—one she did not care to conceal any more. She said, "You are *my* lord now." The gladness that dwelt in that tent, in the plains of Mamre, was a song that never had been sung in Eden fair. And lo, according to the time of life, Isaac was born, Abraham's heir.

THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

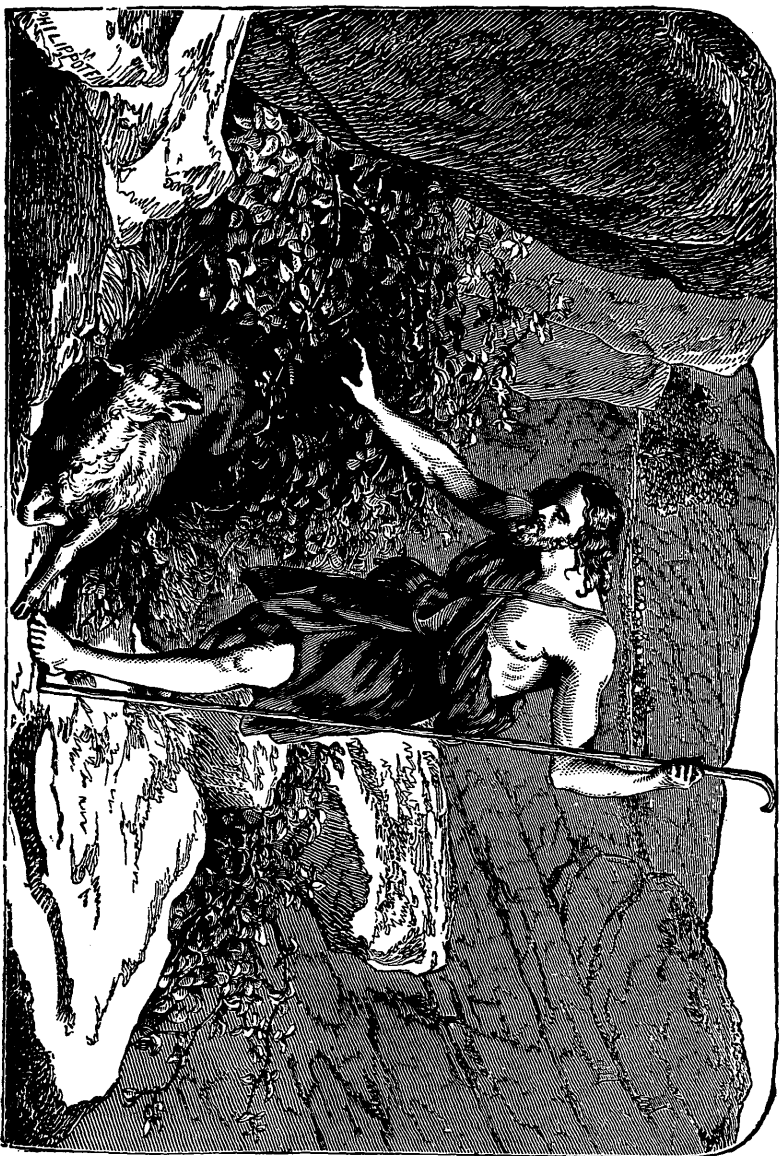
Luke XV., 1-7.

This parable was spoken by the Lord in self-defense, in the presence of a mixed multitude, composed of sinners, publicans, Pharisees, and other pious Jews.

The Pharisees had called his disciples to one side and found fault with him because sinners and publicans gladly gathered about him, and he kindly received and encouraged them. This class of sinful men flocked about him wherever he preached. The Pharisees and Sadducees made it a matter of condemnation. If he was truly a man of God, they contended, he would not associate with such sinners, nor yet encourage them to listen to him gladly.

Some of you have never yet believed on the Lord. I would like for you to see that he was condemned by these goody-good Pharisees for you. If some one defends you boldly and takes your part, you are naturally drawn toward him, and an attachment springs up in your heart. I would like for you, sinner, to see Jesus as your friend and defender. You should rank yourself among his friends, stand on his side, and help to defend him. That's manly; it's heroic. Do not stand any longer with those who are his enemies.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.



Publicans and sinners "drew near for to hear him." Molasses catches flies, vinegar never does. If the Lord had not had a gentle nature and shown a kindly and sweet disposition unto them, they would not have drawn near unto him. And you, to-night, dear sinner, will see there is the greatest attraction on earth in him if you will only "draw nigh unto him." He is a friend in need, a friend indeed. As a rule, worldly friends leave us when we are in deep trouble. You run out of money or lose your position and come to want, where are your friends then? But Jesus is a friend who sticketh closer than a brother. O sinner, get Jesus for your friend.

When the Pharisees on this occasion spoke out, and condemned Christ, he spake a parable to show to them and to show you and me how he will defend a sinner who draws nigh unto him. See, he is taking things of an earthly nature to explain divine things. "What man of you," said he unto them, "having an hundred sheep, and one should go astray and get lost, would not leave the ninety and nine and go out and seek until he should find the lost sheep?"

He imputes unto them the true shepherd heart, and says they would all do exactly what not a man among them would do, and for which they had just condemned him. There was not a sinner present who did not see the point. Every publican saw how he had impaled the Pharisees, and justified himself in being their friend at the same time. Yet he had

said only good of the Pharisees. By this Heaven and earth contrast he shows what a friend he is to the lost. Ah, he is the Heavenly shepherd in human disguise. How enraged they were when they saw that the point and laugh was against them. They pursued and hounded him from that on, day and night, until they had impaled him on the Roman cross. That's part of what it cost him to be the sinner's friend. O sinner, what thinkest thou of thy Redeemer? Say, shall he not also be thy Saviour?

Now, let's read this parable together. I want to give you the Heavenly meaning of it. We do not want to be confused nor amused with the mere letter of it, for the letter killeth. Wherefore the dear Lord has shown me the spiritual side of it for you to-night.

You have observed that when a magnificent building is to be erected what a great lot of scaffolding is employed, and how it looms up against the sky, before the image of the true edifice appears; but afterwards the scaffolding is removed, and there stands the palace in all its glory! So the imagery employed by the Lord in this parable about the good shepherd and his flock of one hundred sheep, and how when one wilful sheep strayed away, the shepherd left the ninety and nine and sought for and found and carried his lost sheep back to the fold, is but the scaffolding through which he seeks to show us "the house not made with hands," and to teach us how God looks after his flock.

Now, why "one hundred sheep," no more and no less? Because that is a round number, which stands for "all in all"—God's wondrous universe of worlds, arising from one to manifold. Then the meaning of the parable is this: God had one hundred worlds. Of all these worlds only one went astray, and was lost in the darkness of sin, which is death. The lost sheep is this poor sin-sick world of man—the Adamic world. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, seeking "that which was lost." He it is who gave his life that he might have the right to bring it back to the fold, that is, into the Heavenly circle. He it is, sinner, who joyfully left the "glory-circled throne," and came to the earth and took upon him the lost sheep nature. Away out on the mountains of sin and in the valley of death he sought until he had found it. Its suffering, wailing, dying cry arose to the very gates of Heaven. Then God, in love and pity, sent his only begotten Son of the lost flesh to be lifted up on the cross, and lifted out of the tomb—out of death—that "*whosoever* should believe on him should not *perish*, but should have eternal life."

Perhaps you think in your heart, "If all this is true, and this world is the lost sheep, how does it embrace me?" I'll show you. You are an integer, an individual of the world, or race of man. You are "*whosoever*," and his call is unto "*whosoever*" will "believe on his name"—that is, on his Heavenly nature and Heavenly mission. Thus you are

specifically and individually embraced in the call unto this so great salvation. But since it was through *wilfulness*, that is, through an exercise of its own *free will*, and in disobedience to the loving and warning voice of God that this sheep was lost, its return unto the fold, and salvation, is consequent upon its desire to be found [restored] and converted [born] into the Heavenly nature. Hence Christ cries unto it, saying, "Come unto me." ; "Confess me ;" "Follow me, and I will give you rest, and own you before my Father in Heaven." Thus while he is Redeemer of all, he is Saviour of only as many as answer his call. To them he gives "the privilege and the power to become sons of God, who are born not of the flesh, nor of blood, nor of the will of man, but are born of the will of God." If I had a single drop of the Atlantic Ocean in the hollow of my hand, I could say, "I hold the ocean in my hand," for there is not an atom in all the ocean of water that is not in every drop of it. As sin, and consequent death, is an individual affair with each one born of the flesh,—of the "lost sheep" nature,—so is salvation also an individual affair. You are born into the flesh for yourself, and to be saved you must be born out of it for yourself. Jesus is a personal Saviour to the personal sinner who believes on him and confesses him before men.

But learn this also, that Christ is the Good Shepherd. He it is who does the seeking and the finding and the saving. He "laid down" his own life for

the lost sheep. He proved that he is the True Shepherd, not only by coming from Heaven to earth, but also by laying down his life, and being able to take it up again for the sake of the lost Adamic world. By this suffering, by this divine loving and offering, by this victory over death, he hopes to win your heart and get you to hearken unto his calling.

The sinners who heard him that day gladly, were no more "lost" than the pious sinners who scoffed and derided. If there was or is any point of advantage between these two classes it is with the avowed sinners. They who hear him the most readily are the first to be found, for salvation comes by hearing, by obeying the voice of Christ. I would far rather preach to outbreking sinners than to the Pharisee. Of all sinners he is the worst lost.

So if you feel your need of the Good Shepherd, if you want him to find you, if you want to feel his breath upon your face, his arms around you, and receive the lovelight of his eyes into your heavy heart, you'll lift up your voice and say unto him, though never so faintly, "Here am I, O Lord." And like when Peter was sinking in the sea of Galilee, as soon as he cried, "Lord, save me," Jesus gave his hand instantly, so you will find his rest, his peace, hath entered your breast. See you not that it is a question of change of nature—that the Good Shepherd wants to lift the lost sheep out of its ruined nature, and impart unto it the divine nature? Thus he reveals and opens Heaven unto us

again. Thus the great thought of God comes to us through the loving heart and service of the True Shepherd.

I know that in your inmost heart you see that this is precisely what you most long for. Say, sinner, is it not? In his true service and unchanging love how the blessed Christ gives again a view of Paradise. And oh, the comfort and security of being found in him—of wandering in sin no more—of being back in the circle of the Heavenly fold, and there forever safe!

Let me now show you that I have truly interpreted this parable in the light of his Word. How it tells out the relation of Heavenly worlds to ours, and the deep interest and love's labor to bring back "that which was lost," that all may be complete again. Lo, here are the Saviour's words, as he makes his own application: "I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in *Heaven* over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

Ah, it is Heaven that rejoices so; that is seeking to save the lost one. Truly I would like to tell you about that joy, but I cannot. No tongue can tell. You must come and see. Come and enter in by the Open Door. See, it is the Saviour bringing *you* that produces the joy in Heaven. Oh, wondrous is the gospel of Christ Jesus! Truly it is "glad tidings" to the sinner lost. "But how shall I come into so much gladness and light?" That is

the cry which springs in every sinner's heart. And then he begins to flounder and grope about in his own darkness. To realize that one *is* lost fills the soul with direful forebodings. When Lost dawns on the lost one, how dark the gloom ! how dreadful the doom ! But, fainting one, faint not. Day is at hand. Lo, the Saviour hath found thee ! Arise, in all thy weakness. He calls thee. He carries thee in his arms.

More wonderful still is the mystery of the Found—of passing out of death, of living the new-born life ! Lo, “he that seeth the Son and believeth on him that sent him, *hath* eternal life, and *shall not* come into condemnation.”

There are mysteries within and about us that we cannot penetrate, but that in no wise hinders us from breathing the air we cannot see. Only use the same sense about Heavenly mysteries as about the earthly mysteries, and all will be well with thee on earth and in Heaven.

This one glorious fact we all can see, that Christ took the lost sheep nature upon himself and carried it sinlessly through life, and triumphantly through death and hell, up to the throne of God, where he sits to make intercessions for those who love and trust him. Because of this, we who believe on him are *now* as he is, and soon shall see him and be like him in glory.

O sinner, when “found,” you are in the True Shepherd, and he in you. As in your Adamic nature

you sin and die, so in the Christ nature you will sin and die no more. Hark to the glad cry of joy as he calls the angelic hosts, and shouts, "Rejoice with me, for *I* have found *my* lost sheep."

I despair of being able to give you any adequate conception of his love of his *ownship* in thee. This is the deepest of all mysteries. It was his own that was lost, and now is found; that was dead, but now is alive again. Sinner, you are *his* precious *own*, and shall he not be *your* precious *own*? First, you are his own by creation—by the earthly life you are living; second, you are his own by his own life given to redeem thee from hell. Is this not enough to woo and to win thee? What more can he say than he has said unto thee? Oh, come and confess him now, and he will confess thee before God in Heaven.

This is God's charming love story to fallen men. Since the joy over *one* sinner who returneth unto the fold is so great in Heaven, surely it must find its echo in the sinner's soul, and its fulfilment in the saint's delight. See you not, sinner, that Jesus is God's answer to all the longings of your higher nature after eternal life and everlasting rest from weariness, pain and death? His rest is the ending of all strife; his kingdom a land where surges never roll, and sorrow never presses the soul. Oh, wilt thou not come and be made forever whole?

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD.

I. Kings XII., 25-33; XIII., 1-34.

At this time, two thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven years ago, Jeroboam was reigning over the ten tribes of Israel. Previous to the death of King Solomon, a prophet met Jeroboam, and symbolically represented unto him the impending destruction of the kingdom of Israel, by rending a new garment into twelve pieces, and giving unto him ten of the pieces. The ten signified unto him that God had decreed that he should become king over ten tribes. He was then serving as an officer in King Solomon's army, "a mighty man of valor"; but he was soon after banished by the king for "lifting up his hand against him." Probably Solomon had heard of the prophecy, and became jealous of him. He was an exile in Egypt when his friends sent him news of the death of Solomon, and requested him to hasten back. He was present at Shechem when Rehoboam, Solomon's son, rejected the counsel of the wise old men, and acted on the advice of the foolish young men, and he heard the furious cry of the ten tribes: "To your tents, to your tents, O Israel!" He was forthwith declared to be the lawful king of the ten tribes. He was then in possession of his kingdom in *fulfilment of the word of the Lord*. And yet he foolishly thought *he*

must do something to maintain himself against Rehoboam, who became king over two tribes, and to retain the confidence of the ten tribes, when all in the world he had to do, was to believe, and say, "What the Lord hath given the Lord will surely keep."

But after the manner of the sinner, Jeroboam said, in his heart, "If this people go up to Jerusalem to do sacrifice, then shall the heart of this people turn again unto Rehoboam, king of Judah, and they shall kill me." So, to forestall this imaginary result, he wickedly conceived the idea of establishing idol worship in his kingdom, and he set up two golden calves, one at Bethel, and one at Dan. He took counsel with certain men about him. They saw what he wanted, and quickly agreed with him. Alas, you can always get any number to go with you to do evil; but with what difficulty you get men to turn from the wrong unto the right!

This was an effort, on Jeroboam's part, to have his subjects adopt a course which should pander to their vicious and licentious natures, and the natural disposition of the human heart to slide into idolatry. He alleged to his subjects that it was *too far* and *too hard* on them to go up to Jerusalem to worship! To this day, this devil's plea is given by many "who join the church." It is too far, or they are too tired to come out to the place of worship! Why did not Jeroboam say: "I do not care how often you go up to Jerusalem to worship. The more faithful you are

the better it will please me. The God of David is the God of Jeroboam. I am anxious that you shall observe all that is written in the law of Moses for you"? But he thought he must have a religious feast and ceremony like that held in Jerusalem ; so he ordained one for the same day, the fifteenth day of the eighth month, at Bethel, and commanded all his subjects to observe it, instead of going up to Jerusalem. He erected an altar at Bethel, for sacrificing unto the golden calf he had made. There he assembled the priests he had created out of the meanest and lowest sort of people, "according to the device of his own heart," when the Lord had commanded that all priests should be taken from the tribe of Levi. At his command all the people were assembled at Bethel. Thus he became an idolater !

Jeroboam means, "Fighting against God." Names in Scripture are frequently designations given to denote character. He was a fighter against God. He was Jeroboam. You may even be a Christian, and be Jeroboam. Every act of wilful disobedience is fighting against God. Are you, dear friend, Jeroboam? Whose side are you on? Where do you stand? I pray God you may not have gone so far in disobedience, that you can do evil without compunction of conscience?

King Jeroboam was about to officiate personally at his altar, thus, by kingly example, leading the people unto rebellion against God, when, lo, there stood a stranger in the midst, who cried out in

startling tones against the altar, in the name of the Lord: "O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord: Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee he shall offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And this is the sign that the *Lord hath* spoken: Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out."

This was the cry of a young prophet from Judah. King Jeroboam was greatly enraged against him, and put forth his hand from the altar, crying, "Lay hold on him!" God withered his hand, as he made an attempt to seize the prophet, so that he could not take it down again. This is now the second personal warning he has had that he is "fighting against God." There is the *rent altar*, with the sacrificial ashes poured out, and his outstretched withered arm and hand. Will he not turn from his idolatry? Will not the false priests disband?

Astonished and withered, the king stood ruined and helpless. Why turned he not in prayer unto the god he had set up? Ah, he knew that he had lied, when he said unto Israel, "Behold thy gods which brought thee up from Egypt!" There was no help in the altar of the golden calf; no truth in his profession. Ah, sinner, remember there is no truth in thy heart; no light of Life there! And ye, back-slidden saints, remember there is no power in any form of unbelief. Let not the Jeroboam altar be a

symbol of thy heart! It is not "a profession of religion," but a confession of Christ that saves and keeps.

In utter wretchedness and helplessness, in the presence of his priests and people, and before his idol, Jeroboam felt constrained to call on the prophet of the Lord. Wherefore, he said unto him, "Intreat *now* the face of the Lord thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again?" Hoping to bring the king to himself, the prophet readily consented, and intreated the Lord, and lo, the king's hand was instantly restored, and "became as before." Oh, now Jeroboam and all Israel will return unto the Lord again! But no; they did not. Oh, the numbing power of Sin! A demonstration of mercy and power hardly ever turns a sinner. Nothing but love divine can do that.

King Jeroboam only thought of entertaining the prophet, and offered him a reward. What can be more contemptible than an attempt to pay the Lord for saving power? Yet the devil gets many sinners on that line. He wants men and women to try, and repent, and reform; whereas the Lord's salvation is by Grace, without money, and without price. The Gospel invitation is simply: "Come unto me. Confess me before men, and I will confess thee also before my Father in Heaven." Perhaps you ask, "Are there no rewards of merit?" Oh, yes; but the rewards are for faithful *service*, and have nothing to do with being born again. Rewards belong to the

saint's life, and not to the sinner's denial of self and confession of Christ unto salvation.

May you every one be as true as this prophet was when he declined the king's invitation and spurned his reward. How true and brave it was for him to declare: "Though you gave me half your kingdom, I will neither rest, eat nor drink in this place, nor return by the way I came. For so the Lord commanded me." It is easy to see what a sensation this created. And I see the prophet wrapping his mantle about him, and marching off by a new route. Wonder why the Lord gave him such a strange command? It must have been to show Israel, and the world also, how polluted is the land, how deserted the people, where idolatry prevails.

This is now King Jeroboam's fourth warning. First, the prophet's cry and rent altar; second, his withered hand and arm; third, his restoration; fourth, the man of God will neither rest, eat nor drink in his kingdom. And yet he continued to fight against God. How awful is the delusion Satan puts upon the heart of king and people. Jeroboam persisted in his wickedness and fight against God until the whole nation was corrupted, and their thoughts were only evil, continually. Though delayed some time, the punishment came sure and terrible. Jeroboam and his family perished miserably. They that died in the city were eaten by dogs; they that died in the field were devoured by fowls, even as the Lord had said it should be. The

symbolic meaning of this is the *total destruction of the wicked, flesh and bones.*

Four hundred and thirty years after the altar of the golden calf was "rent" that day, Josiah, the promised Son of Fire, came and burnt the priests, that were then living, on that same altar, and the bones of them that had died. Sinner, look out! take warning! the word of the Lord never fails. Your time is coming to be burnt, if you die in your sins. And if you believe not that Jesus is the Christ, and thus fail to confess him before men, ye shall surely die in your sins. It is now nearly nineteen hundred years since Jesus said: "The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire. There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Be assured, there will be no escape. Unbelief cannot hide you; death cannot conceal you. Look out, sinner, that you do not wake up in the hell-fire described by the Lord himself, and remember this sermon! I warn you most solemnly to-night. "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Let us now follow the retreating form of the man of God, away from the exciting scenes about Jero-boam's altar. For a mile or two he strides boldly along, but lo, he now falters; begins to lag on the way; looks back; and now, he sits down under an oak tree. Oh, I am so sorry he did not call on the Lord for strength, and hasten out of the land.

Perhaps he almost wishes that he had accepted the king's invitation, and secured his proffered reward; and reasons, in his heart, on this wise: "Why did the Lord lay such strange and hard commands on me?"

He felt so weary and exhausted. The great power he had been the vehicle of had left him so. But all he had to do was to call on the Lord for a fresh supply of spiritual strength. It would have come unto him that very hour. Alas, this halt was the first step of disobedience. O ye back-sliders, do ye not remember by what slow, and almost imperceptible degrees, your first love departed, and ye became weary and hungry in the way of the transgressor? Ah, it is the little doubt in the heart that, by and by, lets the glory of God out! This prophet's heart should have been full of praise and joy over the honor the Lord had bestowed on him, and then he would not have had time to think about being tired.

Among the masses that surged around Jeroboam's altar, stood two sons of an old prophet, who lived in the neighborhood. He was a back-slider. It had been a long time since the Lord could use him. His sons ran quickly home, and told their father that there was a *live* prophet in the land. When he had heard the wondrous story they had to tell him, he said, "Boys, which way did the prophet go? Saddle the ass quickly, and I will ride hard after him and overtake him." As he rode hard he came to a man

sitting under an oak and he said unto him, "Art thou the man of God that came from Judah?" He said, "I am."

Observe the white-bearded old prophet. How venerable he looks as he pleads with the prophet of Judah, and insists that he shall go home with him, and eat and drink. Wearily, yet wistfully, the young prophet shakes his head, and sighs, as he declares: "I cannot; I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee; neither will I eat bread, nor drink water in this place. For this command the Lord gave me." True, the Lord had given him a command like that, but he left out part of it—the part he had already disobeyed; for he was also commanded not to "rest" in that place.

The old prophet was bent on having his own will, thinking what an honor it would be to entertain him after he had refused the king's invitation and reward, so he said, "But I am a prophet also, as thou art, and an angel spake unto me, by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with thee, unto thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But he lied. Yet how plausible and how reasonable all this sounded to the prophet of Judah. He was in a state of mind to believe a lie, or he could not thus have been imposed upon. Oh, how fair a lie often is! Alas, it is believing Satan's lie that damns man! It is here, the old story of the fall over again. Man so readily believes anything that corresponds with the inclinations of his carnal nature, either in

its lust, its hunger, or its pride. And yet God hath told us that the carnal—the mind of the flesh—is death, for it strives and fights against God.

The Judean prophet was hungry for bread and water, and he yielded. Though the Lord himself had spoken to him directly, and had sent him as a chosen messenger of warning and of Divine disapprobation of sin, and had given him express orders not to do certain things, he listened to the voice of man, and that man a stranger, living in the polluted land of Jeroboam—the land of fighting against God! The lie of the old prophet, and the disobedience of the young prophet caused a miscarriage of the warning and lesson the Lord sought to convey to an entire nation. Ah, if he could only rely upon his own! Thus it was that God had to send his only begotten Son into the world.

They were eating and drinking and having a high time together, when suddenly, like a clap of thunder coming out of a clear sky, the Voice of the Lord came, indeed, unto the old prophet; and in deep consternation he had to expose his own deception, and tell his guest that immediate punishment was impending over him. So he did the best he could. He told his sons to saddle an ass, and let the prophet hurry out of the land. Ah, what reproaches and sorrow in that parting!

Now behold the wonder-working prophet riding for his life! How bitter the bread he ate and the water he drank in that place. At length he comes

to the fatal oak where he sat down to rest, and there a lion stands in the way, and smites the breath of life out of his body with a single stroke of his paw.

To show that this punishment comes by Divine appointment, that Israel may assuredly know that the Lord is God, the lion is made to stand on one side like a lamb, and the ass on the other, both looking on the outstretched lifeless form. Twice the sacred record tells it out, that the lion did not dare to tear him, or break a bone of his body. Men passed by and gazed in fear and wonder on the scene. The ass was not afraid and ran not away, and the lion—the type of Satan's power—is but as a switch in the Lord's hand. Naturally an ass is as afraid of a lion as man is of death. Thus stood the ass and the lion, enchained for an hour or two; for the passers-by scattered the news far and wide, and at length it came to the ears of the old prophet, who mounted an ass and rode to the spot, and himself became a witness. There stood the lion and the ass, still gazing on the dead man of God. The lesson thus became the possession of that, and of each on-coming generation, until Jesus comes again. It is yours to-night, brother, sister. I hand it down to you from this pulpit, in the nineteenth century. Beware how you slight or neglect the warnings and commands of your God. And you, sinner, hearken, if the righteous are scarcely saved, and must suffer for every transgression, where shall the ungodly and the wicked appear?

Yet the Lord loved his disobedient and his lying prophet. But sinning brings its own punishment. If we go out on the devil's territory, we must expect to suffer. But I want you to see how the Lord cares for his dead prophet, and lying one too. Not a bone of his dead one's body was suffered to be broken; and when the old prophet came, and saw for himself, the lion ducked his tail and took to flight. What meaneth all this? As to the lion, it means that by and by he shall be chained and subdued. As to the dead prophet, that not a bone of his body was broken, nor his flesh torn, it means that he shall be raised from the dead and live again. He was, in that respect, a symbol of Christ on the cross; for not a bone of his body was broken, signifying that he should rise again the third day, and this fulfilment of symbol and type became an important link in the chain of evidence and demonstration which proves his Messiahship.

It was essential that Israel should see in the punishment of this prophet, for a slight transgression, how awful would be the destruction on account of gross sinning. One who was almost a just man, was punished as a warning to the many wickedly unjust and ungodly. By the stripes of Christ are we healed. He who knew *no* sin was made sin for sinners, that, seeing how anxious our God is to save us, we should look unto him and be reconciled. That the stainless and sinless One should suffer to prove God's love, and be a witness of the ruin of

our nature, from which he yearns to rescue us, is surely warning enough, and also the most inviting voice that ever fell on mortal ear. Surely we now understand that through the born-again, alone, can we escape the doom of whatsoever is born of the flesh.

The old prophet truly returned unto the Lord. He tenderly buried the dead prophet in his own tomb, and commanded his sons that his own bones should be buried in the same sepulchre. "Alas, alas, my brother!" was his heart-piercing cry. He never recovered from the shock.

In conclusion, I extend two invitations. If you are a backslider, I exhort you, in the name of the Lord, to come forward and make a confession unto restoration. If you are a sinner, I invite you, in the name and by the authority of the Lord, to come and confess *him* before men, that he, keeping his word, may confess you also before God in Heaven. Let every soul who needs to come, quickly arise and gladly come unto the outstretched arms of the loving Christ. He will heal all thy backsliding, O backslider, and love thee unto the end. He will freely give every burdened sinner rest, peace, joy and righteousness, who but comes and takes him at his word.

CHRIST AT THE PHARISEE'S HOUSE.

Luke VII., 36-50.

This is a dramatic scene. There are three principal actors: Simon, the Pharisee, Jesus of Nazareth, and a woman of the town. The others are Simon's friends, leading men of the city, and the apostles of Jesus. I suppose this occurred in the city of Nain, a walled city of Galilee, and not long after the raising of the widow's son, which created such a profound sensation throughout the whole region, that every one was struck with awe and amazement. Simon had heard much of it; he was a learned and distinguished man. He was a ruler, very pious and very haughty. He was a Pharisee, which signifies that he belonged to a very strict religious sect. The word means separatist. The Pharisees held themselves apart from even other Jewish religionists. For a Pharisee to eat or hold social intercourse with sinners was a pollution, from which only a ceremonial cleansing could free him.

Simon is a shrewd, long-headed Jew. He thinks he can see further into a mill-stone or pierce the disguise of a pretender quicker than any one else. He has invited Jesus to dine with him, not as a social or reverential token of friendship, but that he may have a personal opportunity of looking him through and through, without mixing with the com-

mon people. He believes that the people who flock about Jesus are a class who do not know the law, and are accursed with irreligious feelings and sentiments. But *he* is a Pharisee, Abraham's seed, a chosen vessel of righteousness. He thinks that as Jesus is not a Pharisee he must be an impostor. He believes he is practicing some sort of deception, and so he has invited him into his house, to inspect and to detect and expose him. He intends to look him through and through. He went through a struggle with his pride to get his consent for the contact, but he is making the sacrifice for the sake of Phariseeism. Afterwards he expects to ceremonially purge himself.

Well, dear friends, that's the man who has heard strange rumors about the Master, and now he intends to look him in the face, eye to eye. He does not doubt but that he will detect something dishonest in him. I say, that to bring a man into your house to dine for such a purpose is most contemptible, and reveals at once Simon's true character.

Now, there was a woman in that city "who was a sinner." That's a very significant term. She was discarded—an outcast. She is no Pharisee, nor any other sort of sectarian. She is an open and an avowed sinner. Now, dispensationally considered, this world is divided into two great classes: One the saint; the other the sinner; one Israel, the other Gentile. Then these two classes may again be divided. There is the higher and the lower life

saint ; the faithful and the unfaithful saint. Then the sinner class may be divided into the self-righteous sinner and the outbreking, avowed sinner. The first usually consider themselves to be first-class moralists, upright, pious, and good enough to get into Heaven without any Saviour ; the second class consider themseves to be outcasts, unworthy of any recognition from God or Christ.

Well, this woman had heard wonderful things concerning Jesus, and came to the conclusion that *he is not* a Pharisee, nor a proud religionist of any sort ; he is no hypocrite nor a separatist. She has heard how he had befriended and saved one poor woman from the deepest sorrow, and she believes he would also befriend her, if he only knew her desolation. In her early days she was fair and beautiful to behold, but her beauty and passion had made her the victim of some Romeo's false vows of eternal devotion. The first misstep led to another, and she glided further and further into sin, until at last she is an outcast. Men only seek her to further abuse her, and women scoff and turn their backs on her. Ah, there is no way of ruin so lonely and forsaken as hers.

Now, Simon drew his friends about him and said, "I believe I'll invite this man to dine with me, and I'll find out something about him. I'll see whether he is a fraud or not." They thought this a very good idea, and a very great concession on Simon's part. The end seemed to justify the means. Jesus ac-

cepted the invitation, and John and James and Peter and the other apostles went with him. They were all invited. The tables were spread, and divans on either side, on which the guests reclined, resting on the left elbow, leaving the right hand free. This reclining position brought those on one side of the table face to face with those on the opposite side. Simon sat exactly opposite to Jesus, at the head of the first table, where he was enabled to look him directly in the face. In this position the feet of the guests stretched out on the divan. It was a long dining-hall, and every one on the outside was welcome to come and look in on such occasions, and it was not considered impolite. But only those who were invited could come inside. Now, they are all seated, and the meal is being served.

When Jesus came in, Simon met him in a friendly way, but he forgot something. It was the custom of Eastern countries, when a guest entered the house, for the host to take off his sandals, and offer him water to bathe his feet. This was the first thing to be done. When Jesus came in, Simon forgot this. Another custom was to greet a revered guest with a kiss. Simon did not kiss Jesus when he came in; and another custom which he should have observed, was to anoint his head with oil, showing that he recognized him as a messenger from God. The Lord knew that this invitation was a challenge. He went because he hoped to do some good, to sow some seeds of truth even in the Pharisee's house. I

cannot undertake to describe the whole scene in all its details unto you. You can readily imagine how the conversation would run. There was a little embarrassment at first. Simon felt a little bit uncomfortable. He began to be conscious under the full, mild, but penetrating gaze of Jesus, that he was fully understood, and that the man before him was not one bit disturbed. His self-possession and equipoise was wonderful.

It was evident that Jesus was waiting for Simon and his fellow-conspirators to uncover their plot. So they had to begin by asking him about this and that report of his miracles. They wanted to know if it was really true, and whether he was correctly reported, and what *means* were used. I think the Lord answered them about this way : "All I have done or said was in broad daylight and before the multitudes ; they are the witnesses ; ask them." So Simon is making no progress at all, but the Lord does not intend to let the occasion slip away unimproved ; he'll make *his* point ; he never fails. Something will come to pass before the meal is over to afford him an open opportunity. The handwriting of God goes on in the hearts of men and women, whether they know it or not.

Now, while they were sitting there in Simon's house, yonder, by the door, enters an uninvited person. The servants tried to keep her out, but she *would not* be kept out ; she had something for *him*, and she must take it in to him. Oh, she is a creature

fair to see. She has beautiful eyes, and such a dowry of hair! She looks around with an anxious, scared look, and sees a frown on all the faces that look up at her, that one so unholy should dare to enter there. But there was one face in that crowd which did not look up. Apparently—mark you, I say apparently—he is unconscious that there is such a woman in the world. She looks around until her eyes fall on him.

She had made up her mind that since he had been so kind to a poor woman she knew, he would not send her away with her heavy burden. She had said within herself, "Oh, if he only knew the wretchedness of my poor sick heart, and how I want to get away from the life I am living. If I could only give him something to show how I love and adore him, I know he would receive me and forgive my sins, even if I am a poor creature of the town."

She thought right, too. She understood him far better than Simon, or any other Pharisee sinner. "I don't know," said she, "how I'll dare to go to that house. I have nothing to recommend me; everything is against me; but I'll do this: I'll go to an apothecary shop, and I'll buy the finest flask of precious ointment—some of that used only for holy purposes. Perhaps he'll see in my offering what I would like to be, and I'll go and anoint his feet." And so she did. Did you ever do a real generous deed, and it made you feel good for days? I once

succeeded in giving away a piece of money in such a spirit* that it made me glad for days and weeks. Now, this woman has done a true, generous thing. There are two rights: First, *think* right; then *act* right.

Now she is coming in. Her dark, piercing eyes have caught sight of *him*. She is creeping noiselessly along the wall, looking timidly and furtively about, like a haunted thing, holding the precious ointment close in her bosom. She does not want anybody to see it, or suspect what she intends to do. She dares not look him in the face, but she got down low at his feet, for her condition is low. She will show him what she suffers. He pays not the slightest attention to her; he never lets on. She begins to unlace and to remove his sandals. No sooner had she *touched* him, than the depths of her nature were stirred, and hot tears fell thick and fast, and as they fell she saw they were upon his feet. She had not intended this. She took the hair of her head, the dowry of womanhood, all that she had that was pure, and she wiped his feet with the hair of her head. Then she took the box of ointment from her bosom and broke it, and anointed his feet with the ointment.* The rich perfume filled the room.

I tell you, brethren, that the angels in Heaven looked wonderingly and lovingly down on this sight in Simon the Pharisee's house.

In the meanwhile, Jesus never looked toward her, nor is there the slightest flinching or movement of a

muscle to show that he is conscious that all this is going on. When Simon realized that the purpose of the woman was to approach Jesus he was glad in his heart, for he thought it might prove to be the very thing to enable him to condemn the Wonder-worker. Now, you all apprehend that Jesus knew from the beginning wherefore the woman was come, and he just let her go on, that she might show her contrition and her love. Do you want to catch a Glimpse of Heaven? There it is; there you can see what Heaven is.

Simon saw the woman coming in. He knew her in a personal sense, as you know me. But Jesus had never seen her. He knew nothing about her history, except as he is Son of God. He knew her in that sense only. Simon would have had her put out, only her purpose soon dawned upon him. He was then glad of her intrusion, for he thought it would bring Jesus confusion. He waits to see what he will do, saying within himself, "Now, if he is really a prophet he will know that this is a woman of the town, and, being divinely sent, he will not permit her to touch him. If he permits her to touch him, he is no prophet."

The Lord looks steadfastly into Simon's eyes and mind, and reads all that passes there. The room is full of the sweet odor. The woman has rendered her homage, and it is full time for Jesus to speak out. With his gaze still fixed mildly upon Simon, he said unto him, "Simon, I have somewhat to say

unto *thee*." Simon confidently, almost arrogantly, replied, "Master, say on ;" in a tone equivalent to saying, "I am ready to answer anything *you* have got to say." Jesus said unto him : "A certain creditor or lender had two debtors ; the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty. When they had not wherewith to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Which of them, therefore, will love him most ?"

Simon scratched his head, and after a little study said, "He, I suppose, to whom he forgave the most." Jesus said, "Thou hast rightly judged." Simon now felt proud that his judgment had been approved. The parable had such an innocent look, that he had no suspicion at all he had been caught by it, or that his judgment condemned himself. But Jesus quietly turned toward the woman at his feet, and said unto him, "Simon, seest *thou this* woman?" Ah, then Simon began to see her as he never before had seen her ! He began to feel a sense of consternation. He saw the woman was in the parable, and he saw that Simon the Pharisee was also there. His self-complaisance forsook him. "Seest thou this woman?". There she is ! She is the debtor who owes five hundred pence sins. She has not wherewith to pay. Simon only owes fifty pence sins, but he cannot pay. He has nō more "wherewith" than the woman. Both are at the mercy of the Creditor. O men and women, we need to know this to-night ! There are first-class men and women who are building on the "sand" of a moral Self ; who think because they

are not steeped in sins, they can make a clear settlement with God. That is the way Simon thought. So the Lord, by a parable, taught him and all men everywhere, that while Simon only owed fifty pence sins, and the woman five hundred,—ten to one,—yet *neither* could pay.

Oh, Simon sees the woman now; and so Jesus said unto him: "Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet; but *she* hath washed my feet with *her* tears, and wiped them with *her* hair. Thou gavest me no kiss; but *she* hath not ceased to kiss my feet since she came in. My head with oil *thou* didst not anoint; but *she* hath anointed my feet with ointment. [A thousand times more precious than oil.] Therefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much [for she loves me much]; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

It must ever be remembered that this is spoken to a *self-righteous* sinner; to a legalist; to a Pharisee, and is not intended to teach either that sin is a debt, or that men should become great sinners that they may be forgiven much, and therefore love much. It is simply taking this man on his *own* ground, to show *him* that with all his morality and supposed freedom from great sins, he is really a more obdurate sinner than the woman; and that, through self-reliance, he is less likely to be saved than an outbreking sinner. How very mean and contemptible the Lord made

Simon to appear in his own house! Well, that's God's mind concerning this class of sinners.

Having said all this unto Simon, Jesus turned unto the woman, and, for the first time, speaks unto her. She had to wait until the Lord rebuked and confounded Simon. And he said unto her, "Thy sins are forgiven." Doubtless he said more than that, but that is all the record gives. It is a bare epitome, I think I see how it was. He took her by the hand and said, "Daughter, arise; thy sins are all forgiven thee." O brethren, that melts my heart, and the heart of any man, unless the conscience has been seared as with a hot iron. This woman is a type that embraces all sinners. You cannot get above Simon, nor below the woman. All the misery and woe of humanity lie between. And in her, Jesus graciously shows that he will receive all sinners who come unto him. Put yourself in this scene; and tell me whether you would rather be before the Lord in Simon's or the woman's place? Mark you, Jesus did not ask her about her record. I tell you that there are preachers who are afraid to tell out the Gospel in its fulness. They say of me, that I am treading on dangerous ground, when I preach these things. But I say unto you, that Jesus gave her his hand, and said, "Daughter, arise, thy sins are forgiven thee." Oh, listen to the peace-speaking voice!

That was enough for her; and it is enough for me. It meets my unqualified approbation and highest

admiration. I adore thee, Lord, for that! He accepted every act of homage from her, while he took pains to show Simon the Pharisee what a hypocrite he was. "*Thou* gavest me no water for my feet; but *this* woman hath washed my feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head. *Thou* gavest me no kiss; but *this* woman hath not ceased to kiss my feet since she came in. My *head* with oil *thou* didst not anoint; but *this* woman hath anointed my *feet* with ointment." Simon wished he had never been born, or that a millstone was about his neck and he had been cast into the sea; but the woman was glad of all she had suffered, since it had brought her to *his* feet, and to hear such gracious and Heavenly words.

Both had been weighed and found wanting. Both were bankrupt, that is, perishing creatures, and could do nothing to get out of it. But the woman believed in the heart and pity of the Lord, and she found no trouble about being received and *saved*. She cast herself upon his love and mercy, and that moved him to frankly forgive all. She showed that she loved much and could love more. *He* wanted *her* love. For God is love, and longs to *be* loved. And then coming unto him, and touching him, and being received before them all—oh, how glad that made her heart! She became "a new creature" *before* she arose from his feet. That's the King and the Kingdom of Heaven. How full of joy she was. The church was within her.

Now, we need to get deep into this. There is no woman who can, by purity and piety, lift herself out of self, no matter how gentle, or esthetic, or graceful she may be, nor how much she mingles or does not mingle in first-class society. What I say of Woman, I say of Man also. If either dies in Self, where Christ and Heaven is, they can never be. This is the reason Jesus told the purest and most pious man in Jerusalem that *he* "*must* be born again"; born from above; born of the Truth and of the Spirit. The Truth is Christ; the Spirit is God. Marvel not at this; for that which *is* Flesh *is* flesh, and that which *is* Spirit *is* spirit. Then, "born again," simply means passing out of the earthly or flesh nature into the Heavenly or God nature.

Now this woman had been born again. She goes out of Simon's house a child of the King of the Kingdom of Heaven, with her name written in the Book of Life. She came unto Jesus just as she was, and *he* chose to receive her. That settled it forever. Mark, he did not simply say, "Thy sins are forgiven." That was said more for the pious scoffers present, and *they* all murmured and said, "Who is this that even forgiveth sins also?" But the real word of life and comfort is this: "Thy faith hath SAVED thee; go thy way in peace."

If you think Jesus Christ simply pardons sinners, you miss the mark of the high calling of God in his Son altogether. What is pardon of past sins to a sinful, dying creature? The *true word of life*, stript

of legal fiction, was spoken when Jesus said, "Thy faith *hath* saved thee." That's eternal life. "Go in peace." That's the Comforter. God's thrice blessed peace—not the peace of this world. This is not "a farewell salutation," as some of the commentators have it. Not many of them expound truly the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They seek to make a man's theology out of God's Christology. The Lord did not leave this woman in any doubt. If he had said nothing but, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," she might have said unto him, "That covers the past, but how about the future and getting into Heaven?" To settle that and all kindred doubts and questions, he said, without any prompting, "Thy faith *hath* saved thee." The word "*hath*" implies that she *had* already been saved, and he only now declares it for her comfort and a witness unto all present. But I forbear. It is unspeakable. . . . His last word unto her put a Heavenly grace upon everything: "Go thy way in peace."

THE JOURNEY OF THE TWAIN.

II. Kings II., 1-18; Matt. XI., 28-30. "I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me."

"Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Now, dear friends, in the Journey of the Twain, that is, in the Journey of the Two, which we are to consider to-night, I must, first of all, define the meaning of certain names. Elijah means, God the Lord; Elisha, the God that saves; Gilgal, wheeling, or revolution; Bethel, House of God; Jericho, His moon, or radiance; Jordan, River of Judgment.

This is a parable, or allegorical representation of a happy, triumphant Christian, following the Lord Jesus Christ; an allegorical representation unto you and me; but an actual transaction as between Elisha and Elijah, and the sons of the prophets.

Elisha had now been following Elijah for ten years. He had received an express call from God. He was plowing in a field with twelve yoke of oxen. Now, a man who can manage twelve yoke of oxen can become a faithful follower and a heroic preacher of the gospel of Christ Jesus. A man who can manage his own affairs successfully can serve the Lord faithfully. Elisha had serious thoughts as he was plowing. He had his God in his mind; his



ELIJAH THROWING HIS MANTLE ON ELISHA.

heart was uncontaminated by the idolatry which filled the land. He was thinking of Elijah, the only true prophet in Israel. If he had not seen any of the miracles wrought by him, he had heard of them, and his heart was with him, and he longed to see him.

Elijah had now served the Lord six years as a prophet. What a life of thought, exhortation, and demonstration of power his has been! He had made up his mind that punishment was the only means of bringing Israel out of idolatry and licentiousness. He was the representative of "God the Lord." He stopped all rain for three years, and notified king and people why it was withheld. He suffered greatly himself, and had to go into hiding, and be fed by the ravens at the brook Cherith. It was the loneliest and most dismal spot on the earth, but he flinched not. After a year the brook dried up, and yet he would not call for rain on the land. Seeing his faith, the Lord sent him unto the widow of Zarephath, and when he arrived, weary, hungry and thirsty, he saw a poor, haggard, hungry woman, gathering two sticks, all she could find, to bake the last handful of meal in a barrel, for her son and herself to eat, and die. And this is what his service and fidelity have brought him to. But he murmured not, and bravely told the woman who he was. He said unto her, "Fear not." She gave him, first, the last morsel, and lo, the meal in that barrel never gave out!

Afterwards he challenged the prophets of Baal to a test at Mount Carmel, and told them to build an altar. "Now," said he, "put your sacrifice upon it, and call upon your god to send fire down upon the altar and consume the sacrifice. If he answers you, Baal shall be God. If he does not, I will call upon the Lord my God to send fire and consume the sacrifice upon my altar, and if he sends fire and consumes it before you all, then the Lord shall be God."

Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal consented, and began to be very frantic, and called loudly on Baal from morning until noon. They leaped on the altar in their frenzy, and cut themselves with knives and lancets. Elijah mocked them; the great crowd jeered. You know there are persons to this day who think God can be reached with a loud voice. Well, he cannot.

Then Elijah called all the people about him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, that was broken down. He took *twelve* stones, and "built them up in the name of the Lord," and he made a trench round about the altar and filled it with *twelve* barrels of water. The bullock he cut in pieces, and laid them in order on the altar. Then he called on his God, and fire came down and consumed his sacrifice at once, and the fire was so intense that it licked up the water in the trench. When the people beheld it they fell on their faces and cried out, "The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God!" Elijah

called on them, and they slaughtered all the prophets of Baal; not one escaped. Then he said unto King Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain."

Directly the rain came down in abundance. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel; and, strangely enough, Elijah girded up his loins and ran before him unto Jezreel. Ahab went in, and told Jezebel, the wicked she-devil, and she sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me if I do not have thy head by this time to-morrow." This she said because he had slain her prophets. When Elijah heard this he became panic-stricken, and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, and thence he went a day's journey into the wilderness. There, exhausted and disheartened, he sat down under a juniper tree, and requested the Lord that he might die. He cried, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers."

What a coward he had been! What a strange affright! I have myself been so intimidated by the devil when preaching. Suddenly, sometimes, he has made it to appear as if my words were no more than the tinkle of a cymbal.

Elijah fell asleep under the juniper tree—blessed rest—and the Lord sent an angel, who touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee." Ah! the Lord had not forsaken him. He arose, ate, and fell asleep again. The second time the angel awoke him, and he arose, and

did eat and drink, and "went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights, unto Horeb, the mount of God."

There the Lord taught him many things. He lodged in a cave; and, behold, the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" When he had told the Lord how zealous he had been for him, and how the children of Israel had forsaken his covenants and torn down his altars, slain his prophets, and that he alone was left, and that his life was sought to be taken, the Lord said, "Elijah, go forth, and stand on the mountain before me." Then a strong and mighty wind rent the mountain, but the Lord was not in it. Then an earthquake made it reel, but the Lord was not in it. After that, fire enveloped it, but the Lord was not in the fire. Then he heard a "still small voice," and that was the Lord. Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle. The other things were not the voice of the Lord. Elijah had been taking drouth, famine and slaughter for the voice of God.

"What doest thou here, Elijah? Go, anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, and Elisha, the son of Shaphat, to be prophet in thy room." He must now anoint his successor. Lo, the Lord names him. God never makes a mistake in his man. There was no other in all the world but Elisha who could be successor to Elijah. He was a man of a certain character, and had the Lord in his mind continually. He looks down to-night, and sees that certain ones

are going to be faithful and win a crown. Elijah goes on his way to Damascus, anoints Hazael, and is returning through Abel-meholah. He sees a man plowing in a field; the Lord tells him, that is *my* man. Elijah strode close by, and, in passing, threw his own mantle on the shoulders of Elisha, and passed on. Not a word is spoken; that is Elisha's call. You would have said, "What meaneth this? I would like to know, but I cannot leave my business to find out." Well, I will tell you what Elisha did. He left his plow and his twelve yoke of oxen and ran after the stranger, and said, "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and I will follow thee." Elijah looked long at him, as if he would read him through, and said, "Go back again, for what have I done unto thee?" He was not thus to be deceived; but, like Daniel, he knew the handwriting of his God. I want you to understand these things. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Elijah said, "What have I done unto thee?" That would have thrown almost any one else into the dark. But Elisha knew that a symbolic action of that kind must be full of divine meaning. It matched something in his heart, and seemed an answer from Heaven. So he said, "But I will follow thee." He kissed his father and his mother, took a yoke of oxen and slew them, boiled their flesh with a fire made of the instruments of the oxen, and gave it unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and overtook Elijah, and ministered

unto him for ten years. Day and night, they were always together. Never had any prophet such a servant. I do not think Elijah ever told Elisha that he had called him to be his successor. He left him to interpret the symbol of the mantle the best he could. Ah, brother, sister, have you ever yet found out the symbol of your baptism? All this, and a thousand-fold more, precedes the final day's journey of this twain. They were up in the mountains of Ephraim, and "it came to pass that the Lord would take up Elijah into Heaven by a whirlwind." The Lord made up his mind thus to distinguish and honor his most faithful prophet.

The appointed day came, like all other appointed days will come, in the fullness of time. What a day was that for these two! They came down from the mountains very early in the morning. Not a word was spoken. It was no time for words. Both hearts were full of the pregnant event. But, at Gilgal, the silence was broken by Elijah, who said unto Elisha, "Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel." They stood looking tenderly into each other's eyes. It was the first time in ten years Elijah had spoken like that. Impetuously, almost indignantly, Elisha said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." O brethren, the Lord Jesus would have each one of us say that to-night. "So they two went down to Bethel." Remember, Gilgal means "the point of turning." O, what devotion and

love is here! And they came to Bethel, which means "house of God." O, may you all be Bethel!

Here was a school of the prophets, a theological seminary, like we have in Louisville. "The sons of the prophets" in this school came out to greet Elijah and entertain him. While he rested and refreshed himself, and inquired after affairs, the students gathered about Elisha, the servant, for that is all he is yet. They had always been jealous of him. "Why does Elijah have this plow-boy, when we are sons of prophets?" They banked on being sons of prophets. Just like hundreds are going about to-day, saying that they are members of this or that church. Now, the reason that Elijah had Elisha was that God had said, "Anoint the son of Shaphat." God never makes a mistake in calling a Moody, a Campbell, a Spurgeon, or a Barnes. The mistake is when men go out to preach without being called.

So these sons of prophets began to guy Elisha, and they said unto him, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take thy master from thy head to-day?" And he said, "Yes, I know it; hold ye your peace." Here is a new form of trial. At Gilgal it was a love test; here it is a railing, jeering test, assuming that he is ignorant of what is about to happen, and that he is on a fool's errand. His response is short and decisive. In plain English, he tells them to hold their tongues, and to let him alone.

How they came to know of the impending translation I cannot tell. Perhaps they thought if Elisha came to know it he would not care to follow Elijah so closely. At best, these sons of prophets were only nominal believers, and had many doubts about Elijah getting into Heaven by a whirlwind. Whoever had heard of such a thing?

Elisha had hardly had time to recover from this assault, when out came Elijah, ready to proceed still further, and said unto him, "I pray thee, tarry here, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho." But Elisha promptly said, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." "So they *two* came to Jericho." This is now the second love test. Here also was a school, and the sons of the prophets entertained Elijah, and while he rested they talked with Elisha. Only an epitome is given of what was said. All of it would make a volume. But this they did say unto him, "Knowest thou that thy master will be taken from thee to-day?" And he answered, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace." Directly Elijah came out, and said unto Elisha, "Tarry, I pray thee, here; the Lord hath sent me to Jordan." Elisha said again, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee."

"And they two went on." This is now the third and last love test. It is at this point of Christian experience that the true disciple becomes his moon, his radiance. The Light of Life now shines out from him. Elijah now left off telling Elisha to tarry. Oh !

I want you all to get to a point in the divine life where the Lord will never need to test you again. Suppose Elisha had taken Elijah at his word, and tarried? He would have missed everything. But he said, every time, just the very thing Elijah wanted to hear, and he did the very thing he wanted him to do. So "they two went on." How close is their walk now! Jordan is five or six miles eastward. Mark, it is eastward they journey now. Their eyes are eastward; their steps onward. Oh, what expectant moments—waiting for the sign in the sky!

What think you the sons of the prophets did? They took up a position on the high cliffs, near Jericho, so as to view from afar what should come to pass. In that climate you can see distinctly, on a clear day, a distance of ten or fifteen miles. They wanted, stealthily, to have a view of what might or might not happen. They had their doubts about going up into Heaven by a whirlwind. They wanted to have a view, so in case of accident they could fly to the rescue! So fifty of the sons of prophets perched there on the cliffs.

The twain have now reached the Jordan—"river of judgment"—symbolically denoting the point in spiritual life where we are willing to have *all* our sins adjudged and put away forevermore.

Here Elijah took his mantle, wrapped it together, and smote the waters of Jordan, and lo! they divide, roll up on either hand, and "they two pass over on dry ground." Ah, brethren, do you know what it

is to walk on the ground that Jesus makes dry? There is no miasma and no nightshade there.

On the farther side of the river of judgment all is changed. It is servant following his master no more. So Elijah says, "Come here and walk beside me." Always before, this he had walked a little behind his master. Now it is servant no more, but friend. On the night of his betrayal Jesus said unto his apostles, "Henceforth I call you servants no more, for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth, but I have now called you friends; for all things I have heard from my Father I have made known unto you." O, fellowship divine!

So they two walked and talked together, arm in arm, and heart to heart. And Elijah began to say unto Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." This is the first reference to their parting and his ascension in all the Journey of the Twain. "Before I be taken away from thee." Ah me, what lover talk is this? The long silence of heavy thought is broken. Their communion is ripe and sweet. Thus invited, Elisha freely opened his heart, and he said, "I pray thee, let a double portion of *thy* spirit be upon me." Is it any wonder that, notwithstanding the whirlwind, and Heaven is just at hand, it almost broke Elijah's heart to part with his faithful friend! So he said, "Ask me what you will." This shows forth the true Christian life, brethren. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for *I am* meek and lowly in

heart," saith the Lord Jesus, "and ye shall find rest unto your souls." The similitude is complete. While you are becoming "meek and lowly in heart," you find the Heavenly rest in Christ, your sweetheart.

Now, as they two walked and talked, neither knew just the moment the translation would take place. God had commanded Elijah to journey this way, and he would send the whirlwind. But the fullness of time was just at hand. When Elisha had asked for "a double portion" of his spirit, Elijah said, "Truly you have asked a great thing; nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken up it shall be so." He wanted his eyes to be upon him until the very last moment. This denotes seeing Christ as he sits at the right of God on high.

There were two reasons for Elisha's asking. He did not request to be Elijah's successor, but to have "a double portion of his spirit." One reason of this grew out of his great admiration for the heroic character of Elijah, and the other sprang from a deep sense of his own weakness and unworthiness. You can see from his language that Elijah was surprised; but he said, "Nevertheless it shall be so, if you see *me* when I am taken up." Hard as the asking was, it gratified his heart. O! our God delights for us to prove his love, and ask him hard things.

In the midst of this lover talk the whirlwind came, and parted them suddenly. But Elisha kept his

eyes steadfastly fixed upon Elijah, and as he ascended, up and up, he cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!" And he saw him no more. O, what a name he called him! O, what a swirl of mire and dead leaves the whirlwind did make! But Elisha never took his eyes off of him for an instant, and as he stood gazing, Elijah's mantle came down and fell at his feet, and he knew that it was the symbol of "the double portion." He knew what to do. "He took up the mantle of Elijah, that fell from him," and having first rent his own clothes, to express his grief at the parting, he went back and stood on the bank of Jordan, and smote the waters with the mantle, and cried, "Where now is the Lord God of Elijah?" And lo! the waters parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over. He had the power that very hour, and was not afraid to use it. See you not, brethren, that earth and Heaven is in the Journey of the Twain?

The fifty sons of prophets on the cliffs had witnessed the whole transaction. They saw Elijah ascend, they saw the mantle, symbol of the Holy Spirit, fall, and saw Elisha pick it up and smite the waters, and cross over dry shod. So they cried out, "Lo, the spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha!" And they came and bowed themselves before him. Thus they recognized him as Elijah's successor. He is now to Israel "the God that saves."

The fifty sons of prophets at once began to beg Elisha to let them go and search for the body of

Elijah, saying that "Perhaps the Spirit of the Lord hath cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley." Elisha said, "Ye shall not send." But they urged him until he was ashamed, and, in vexation, he said, "Send." They sought for him three days, and found him not.

Thus from out the olden time the allegory of Elijah and Elisha shadowed forth the true disciple's walk with the Lord Jesus Christ in the gospel yoke. So, brethren, if we take the walk of faith and stand all tests, fixing our eyes steadfastly upon Him who is the beginner and the finisher of our faith, what a triumphant and glorious life it will be! What chariots of fire and horsemen thereof our Lord will make us to be!

“JESUS WEPT.”

The scenes to which I wish to call your attention are recorded in the eleventh chapter of St. John's gospel, from the first to the forty-seventh verse. My text is the thirty-fifth verse, “Jesus wept.”

Tears are a sign of weakness. They flow sometimes from vexation, sometimes from sorrow, and sometimes from joy. I weep now, since I have learned the secret of the Lord, oftener from joy than anything else. If I were not weak, I would not weep even for joy. These tears of joy are a silent witness of the power of my God in his goodness unto me.

Now, when “Jesus wept,” there was an earthly cause for it. I want to show you the cause, and then you will see that you have often given him like occasion to weep. What I am about to tell you, ought to make you weep; ought to make you ashamed that Jesus was made to weep.

There was a family of three persons living in Bethany, a little village two miles out from Jerusalem. This family was composed of two sisters, Mary and Martha, and their brother, Lazarus. It was that Mary who sat at the feet of Jesus, and who was afterward first at his tomb. Martha was the housekeeper; always encumbered with “much





CAME THE ANGELS WITH THEIR MINISTRY.

serving." But Mary chose "the better part," which could not be taken away. I have described this family, because here it was our Lord came nearer being at home than any place on earth. They were all three his disciples. But Mary was the charm of the circle.

A little while before the occurrences to which I am calling your ^{own} attention, Jesus had been in that neighborhood, the guest of Martha and Mary; but, the Jews sought to stone him to death. So he departed, and went unto Bethabara, beyond Jordan, a distance of about forty-five miles. After he had been gone a few weeks, Lazarus fell sick, and grew continually worse. They longed for Jesus. So, one morning Martha said, "Mary, here is a professional runner. I have employed him to carry a message unto the Master. What word will you send?" After a little thought, Mary gave this word unto the runner. He was trained to catch the very sound, and to deliver messages in exact words and tones. This is the word she sent: "*Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.*" She repeated it over and over, until the runner said he was sure of it. Martha said, "Is that all you are going to send?" She thought Mary should have asked the Lord to come. But Mary answered, "That is enough. The Lord will understand all." It took the runner one day to go and one day to return. Jesus received him privately. He received the messenger alone, and gave him this return message: "Behold, this

sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby."

Meanwhile, Lazarus grew worse. Mary and Martha were anxiously awaiting the return of their messenger. They had their ideas about what word Jesus would send, and what he would do. They thought he would surely send word that he was coming at once. When the messenger had arrived, and delivered the message as the Lord had given it, they were sadly disappointed and dissatisfied. Mary peevishly asked: "Is that all? Are you sure he said nothing else? How did the Master look? Said he nothing about coming?"

Thus did they fail to recognize the message as Heavenly and divine. Ah me, what a failure! But know you not, brethren, that, when the heart is disturbed, we do not stop to reason, and cannot see clearly? Only when our emotions are at rest do we understand anything divine. Their hearts were disturbed, and they could not get the Heavenly meaning out of that message. It was there, plainly enough. Mary should have rejoiced exceedingly, saying, "What a beautiful message is this! How consoling!" But, alas! she said nothing of the sort; but found fault with the Lord. Ah, brethren, look out! It is an easy thing to be a murmurer, and to find fault even with your God.

They are dissatisfied because he came not. Now, I did not expect anything better of Martha, or of Lazarus. He is sick, burning up with the fever the

devil put upon him—the bite of the Serpent. But, Mary knew better. Oh, if she had just said, “Martha, brother, it is all right. Whatsoever Jesus says is always right.” But she felt it not, and said it not. Well, now you see these two women were in no condition to comfort their brother. You cannot courageously tell another to trust Jesus, and all will be well, when you are not trusting him yourself.

Lazarus died the next day. There he lay, motionless. What a sight to look upon! If ever you have stood, and looked upon *your* dead, you know what I mean. What a difference it makes when it is *your* dead? You and I are not much moved over the accident that killed twelve persons at Ravenna, Ohio. Well, somebody is. It is just as real and true as though we had been there. I want this Bethany scene, as I bring it before you, to be as real as though you had been Mary or Martha, that you may receive the lesson of it.

What will they do? Lazarus is dead. Will they read the Lord’s message over, and say, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby?” Will Mary take Martha in her arms, and comfort her, saying, “This glorifies our Lord. I am so glad we have a brother who is the occasion of his glory. There, there, Martha; it is all right; don’t cry, we shall soon see the glory?” Alas! instead, they wailed in unison, and were heart-broken, and made

haste and buried Lazarus the same day he died. They weep, and they mourn, as if Jesus had not assured them ; as if there was no resurrection, and no Christ in the land.

Martha cannot be much blamed, for she did not yet have much more religion than that ; but Mary, she who had chosen the better part, *never to be taken away* ; Mary, whom the Lord trusted and loved so much ; his most blessed disciple among women ! The Scripture expressly tells us that Jesus loved Martha, Mary and Lazarus. Not in the sense that he loves every one, but in the personal sense ; growing out of congenial personal fellowship. In the sense that John was that "beloved disciple," who leaned his head on Jesus' bosom. There is just that kind of relationship to-day between some and the Lord : but you must live for it.

Let's turn now from the sorrow, and the glorious death at Bethany, unto Bethabara. Jesus did not tell his apostles about the message. They sat and gossiped about the strange abstraction of the Master. Some guessed, probably, that it might be a message from Mary. Well, two days after the runner had departed, the Lord called them around him, and said unto them, "Let us go back into Judea again." This was equivalent to a command to make ready for the journey. So they said unto him with surprise, and a tone of expostulation, "Why, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee, and goest thou thither again ?"

You remember how he answered them, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" and taught them that no man can stumble or fail while following him. But they were not yet satisfied, and so he said, "Lazarus sleepeth, and I go to awake him out of sleep." They replied, with still greater surprise, "Lord, if he sleeps, he doeth well." That's exactly the way they misunderstood him, and so he was obliged to say plainly unto them, "Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for *your* sakes that I was not there, to the intent that *ye may believe*; nevertheless let us go unto him."

Then Thomas, called Didymus, which means "The Twin," spoke up, and said unto his fellow-disciples, "Well, let's all go back with him, and die with him!" So they all followed him, the unbelieving Believers. Ah, what a time the dear Lord did have with them, and the others, too! It took them three days to make the journey. As he waited the fulness of time at Bethabara, and as he walked the hot dusty highways, he thought of them at Bethany. He knew what was going on there, and saw all they thought and did. In like manner he now looks down from the skies on us to-night. Just how would we all feel and act, if we were truly conscious of his personal presence in our midst? Yet his presence is as true as though we saw him!

Well, friends, they arrived at Bethany on Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. At the edge of the village he halted, and would not go in, but sent word of

his arrival. When the servant came to the house of mourning he signalled Martha. She silently arose, and quickly went out to where Jesus was. Oh, how her heart beat, as she sped along the streets! When she saw him, she fell at his feet, and cried, "Lord, *if* thou hadst been here, *my* brother had not died." It is an awful accusation to make; but she was not altogether unbelieving, for she quickly added, "But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask God, he will give it unto thee." Jesus saith unto her, "Thy brother shall rise again." Martha replied, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said unto her, "*I am* the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in *me*, though he die, yet shall he live: and whosoever believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?" She said, "Yes; Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God."

Thereupon he bade her go, and call Mary. She went hurriedly in where Mary still sat, wailing with the Jews, who had come down from Jerusalem, to console her! There she sat, utterly unconscious that the Lord was near, until Martha whispered, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee." She arose without saying a word, and fled to where Jesus still was, on the outskirts of the village. The visiting Jews were perplexed, but guessed that she must be going to the tomb to weep, and they all agreed to follow her. When Mary reached the

Lord, she too fell at his feet, with this accusing cry :
“*Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.*”

Well, *that* was too much, coming from Mary. It was a stab right in his heart. That was putting *her* brother and *her* sorrow between her and him ; between her and her God. Dear Lord, you could stand anything but that from Mary ! Martha said it, and he scarcely noticed it, but reasoned with her, and consoled her. But when *Mary* said it, it nearly broke his heart, and he said not a word unto her. There stood the unbelieving, accusing Jews, wailing in unison with Mary. What a sight of unbelief ! Dear Lord, is there no faith on the earth ?

“When, therefore, the Lord saw Mary weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he was moved with indignation in his spirit, and was troubled.” After he had recovered his composure a little, he said, “Where have ye laid him ?” Martha said, “Lord, come and see.” And she and Mary, and the rest, began to lead him unto the tomb. Ah, me ! Then it was, being again troubled with indignation, “Jesus wept.”

The Jews, looking on, said, “Behold, how he loved him.” They totally mistook his tears, and, alas, ninety-nine of every one hundred Christians have gone on believing, and saying what these Jews said, some of whom were in the conspiracy to put him to death, and went back, from this scene, into Jerusalem, and tried to have him arrested ! Oh, is it not too miserable that the Lord is forever so grossly

misunderstood? Why should Jesus weep that Lazarus was dead? What is "dead" to him? Then "this sickness is not unto death," that is, unto a continuation in death, but "unto the glory of God." So the Jews, and millions of Christians, have had Jesus weeping over his own "glory"! It could not be in sympathy with Mary's sorrow, nor for love of Lazarus, for he was indignant at Mary's unbelief and useless grief, and was about to raise Lazarus from the dead.

Look ye at the Scripture. What saith it? "When Jesus, therefore, saw *her* weeping, and the Jews which came with her weeping, he was moved with indignation in the spirit, and was troubled." I am quoting the Revised Version, which makes the true meaning come out plainer. See! The action turned on Mary's weeping in such an unbelieving fashion and in such company.

He weeps, therefore, not from sympathy, not from sorrow, but over the failure of faith in Mary. These are, alas, bitter tears of disappointment over her unbelief.

And now, the whole company moves on, and soon stands before the tomb, hewn out in the chalk hillside. When they were arrived his indignation again manifested his troubled spirit, but he quickly rallied, and said, "Take ye away the stone." Here Martha interposed and said unto him, "Why, Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he has been dead four days." Now for the first time the Lord refers to

the message from Bethabara. In a tone of reproof and grief he said unto her, "Said I not unto thee that if thou believest thou shouldest see the glory of God?" Then they rolled away the stone. O, what a silence was there!

Thereupon he lifted his hands and eyes toward Heaven, and prayed. He had to pray, because he had been troubled. He had expected to raise Lazarus by their faith, the faith of Mary and Martha. How shall he raise the dead where there is no faith? So he had to ask God "to hear him." Then he cried "with a loud voice," "Lazarus, come forth." And, lo! he that was now dead four days came "forth," bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face bound about with a napkin. Jesus said, "Loose him, and let him go." Thus the tragedy of death ensues in "the glory of God," that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

There is no wailing now, no acclaim of unbelief, no false accusation against the Son of God. Swift contrition and humble petition were quickly followed by complete reconciliation, and peace and joy and wonder reigned supreme in the house of Mary and Martha at Bethany.

"There is love, true love, and the heart grows warm
When the Lord to Bethany comes,
And the word of life has a wondrous charm,
When the Lord to Bethany comes.
There is joy, glad joy, and a feast is spread,
When the Lord to Bethany comes,
And his Heavenly voice brings to life the dead,
When the Lord to Bethany comes."

This is now the first time Jesus ever said anything "with a loud voice." When he said unto the widow's dead son, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise," you could have heard a pin drop, and on board the storm-tossed ship it was a still small voice that said, "Peace, be still." Now he needs must first call on God, and then cry "with a loud voice." The clamor of unbelief and grief had been loud. By his word he lifted Lazarus bodily out of the tomb, restoring his flesh, and calling life into his body, in an instant of time. Verily, this sickness was not "unto death," but "unto the glory of God." Now, the glory is here. Lazarus is alive again. Mary and Martha embrace him, and all three are at the feet of Jesus, nevermore to doubt his word or power; nevermore to doubt his love; nevermore to make him weep.

If they could make him weep, you and I can also. It was a long time before I had eyes to see all these things. Blessed are the ears that have a preacher sent to tell it unto them. Brethren, you have now, I trust, entered a little into the secret recesses of the heart of Jesus. Henceforth live not out in the land of unbelief. May you never, never make Jesus weep.

THE WOMAN'S POT OF OIL.

Text: II. Chron., xvi., 9; Scripture read: II. Kings iv., 1-8.

Second Chronicles, sixteenth chapter, ninth verse. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." I now refer you to a transaction which, in my judgment, illustrates the text. Read II. Kings iv., 1, 8.

I hope to express the symbolic meaning of all this in a manner that will show the spiritual bearing of it. I must explain certain things before I begin to discourse upon it. We must get at certain definitions before we can comprehend clearly. In the text the word "heart" means the soul's affections; "perfect" simply means sincere, upright; "toward" means advancing, in a state of expectancy; "Elisha" means the Lord that saves. I will now read the text with these meanings in it. [Read II. Chron. xvi., 9.]

The things in this allegory were wrought out and recorded 895 years before the birth of Christ. Consequently it is now 2787 years since the woman's pot of oil multiplied its contents so marvellously. This transaction as to the woman and her two sons was a real one, but unto us it is an allegory. The spiritual meaning would not be hid-

den there but for this reason. When I look into the Bible wondrous things I see, revealed only by the Holy Spirit unto those who have eyes to see. When men come into the Spirit of the Lord, and see things in his light, they soon learn to read the symbols, the allegories, the types and the parables, in which the divinest thoughts are expressed. Then they have the mind of Christ, the language of God unto man, which always means the same thing.

You see at once, brethren, we have as much to do with the woman as we have with the pot of oil. Dispensationally considered, this woman is Israel, or the Church, and her two sons the Jew and the Gentile. Her outward poverty and inward misery represent spiritual barrenness and afflictions under the hand of the creditor, who is the adversary, "Who goeth about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." The dead husband is her own deadness unto the Bridegroom, which is Christ Jesus. He came unto her in the person of Elisha, "the Lord who saves," and multiplied the oil, which denotes faith. The Holy Spirit is the multiplying power. Thus by the love and goodness of God she was delivered and became again fruitful.

But we must look at all this in detail.

The symbol of the pot of oil has just as much in it for you and me as the real pot of oil had for this woman and her two sons. We will miss the divine lesson unless we are able to perceive the inner meaning. If we get the true light, what a living

picture it will present unto us! A lover would not write unto his sweetheart in a writing she should not understand. I tell you, brethren, God has labored to make men understand his love for them. When Christ Jesus was on earth, in human nature and tongue, he did everything he could to make himself understood, and he is God's shining love-letter unto us all.

In this scene the poor creature had had a husband, but one day he lay down and rose up no more. And she was a widow, and had two sons to support. Ah! the distress and loneliness of that woman's heart. Who can understand the darkness of a life of separation, where two have lived together in perfect harmony, and reproduced themselves in two sons? There are sorrows that enter the human heart which nothing earthly can assuage—which no mortal can console. She did not know what she was to do. O brother, sister, saint and sinner, look out, it may happen that the darkness of despair may come into your soul yet.

The two boys did all they could to console mother. They gathered about her, and put their faces to hers, their arms about her neck, and said, "Mother, dear mother, don't sorrow so." The eldest son said, "I'll stand by you, I'll work for you and provide;" and the younger son said, "I'll stay at home with you, mother, while brother goes out to work." They did the best they could, but the furniture was all gone; the house was empty,

the floors bare. Truly it was a scene of desolation, within and without. It was an awful condition to be in. There was nothing left in the house save a little pot of oil, and that was caked, dried up and covered with dust and spider webs. It was not even thought of; no account was taken of it. Ah, brethren, when I tell you that this neglected, forgotten pot of oil stands for and is the symbol of the "heart," that should have been upright and sincere "toward" the Lord, you will understand at once that the heart of this woman was not perfect toward God.

Upon this scene of misery the Creditor soon made his appearance. He came ruthlessly and heartlessly, and informed her that he had a claim that must be satisfied without further delay; and, that since she had nothing to pay, he would take her two sons to be bondmen.

In all this multiplied woe and misery it never occurred unto her who she was. But on this fatal day, as soon as the Creditor had gone out, one of her sons cried out, "Why, mother, don't you know that Elisha the prophet is at Bethel, and don't you remember that our father was the son of a prophet?" And she said, "Why, of course I do. How in the world did you come to think about it?" And her son replied, "Well, I heard of Elisha, and the wonderful things he is doing in the land, and I remembered that our grandfather was like unto this prophet; and O mother, if you will just go and tell Elisha, I believe it will be all right." She said, "I

will arise and go forthwith," and she put on her bonnet and started.

Don't you begin to see what it all means? You never live away from your God, but you forget to remember that Jesus is Redeemer of all, and Saviour of as many as on him call. Redeemer means kinsman, and this is the only ground on which we can approach God. Christ became our kinsman that he might be the Door to as many as will enter in by him.

The woman went right to Elisha, the Lord who saves. She does not even think of the pot of oil; no account was taken of it. When things are not accounted, they are of no practical value, though they be diamonds in the rough, or gold in the mine. So she went unto the prophet and told him all the story of her misfortunes. He listened attentively, and then he said unto her, "What shall I do for thee?" That is the way my God always talks. "What shall I do for thee? Ask me what you will?"

Let me illustrate this, to show you that I do not misunderstand it. As the Lord Jesus was approaching Jericho, the mystic city, on his last journey to Jerusalem, a blind beggar, Bartimæus, sat by the wayside, begging. He heard the noise of a multitude passing, and he inquired what it meant. They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing through the city. Thereupon he began to cry out, "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me, have mercy on

me." When the Lord heard himself thus called by name he "stood still." If I was passing along the street of a strange city, and some one should call me by name, I would look about to see what was wanted and who it could be. So Jesus stood still, and said, "Bring him unto me." They brought him, and when he stood before him, Jesus said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And he said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." The Lord said unto him, "Receive thy sight; thy *faith* hath saved thee." Instantly he had eyes to see, and the first object that burst on his ravished vision was Christ Jesus, the Prince of the skies!

So, brethren, when Elisha spoke unto the woman it was Christ Jesus speaking in him, "The Lord that saves." She could not tell what he should do for her. She did not have the faith to ask. So he said, "Tell me what have you in the house?" The all-searching eyes well knew what was, and what was not there; but she must tell her tale herself. She said, "There is not *any* thing." Elisha said, "Think a little; is there not *any* thing?" And when she had told over all that was gone, she said, "Oh, yes; there is a little pot of oil."

You see we always have something in the house. The blind beggar had it. This woman had it. You have it. There is not a man or woman in Louisville who does not have that same pot of oil in the house. But she had forgotten it—the most precious thing

she could have. She had been completely wrapt up in her losses and selfish desires.

Well, Elisha said: "Go home now, and send abroad to all thy neighbors and friends, and borrow *empty* vessels, and borrow not a few; get all you can. When you have got them all together, shut the door on thee, and thy two sons, and thou shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full."

Friends, I want you to see that the door and the windows have got to be shut, and the vessels must be "empty" ones. Mark this well. If you are going to be alone with the Lord, you must shut the world out. If the Lord is to take you up, you must shut the door and windows of your heart against the world, and keep its din and noise and sight out of the house—out of your soul.

Notice particularly that she must take the oil she has and pour it out into those empty vessels, and "set aside that which is full." That's the only way you will ever be "saved" from "the wrath that is in the world," that is, the wrath in your heart.

She hurried home, and told all unto her two sons, and they quickly ran around among the neighbors, and found every one willing to lend them "empty" vessels. "Oh, yes," said they, "you can have all the empty vessels you want." The room of the house was soon nearly full of empty vessels. And the mother cried: "Now boys, shut the door and the windows." She took the little pot of oil. It

held about as much as my two hands would hold put together. And she began to pour out. O you ought to have seen it flow! It ran out so bright and golden! Directly the first empty vessel was filled. Dear old creature, she began to be glad. And now another vessel is filled and set aside. Her face is beaming now. And so it went, on and on, until she was thoroughly enthused, and her two sons shouting for joy. But, lo, the boys are now standing still; and so she says, "Boys, bring me yet another vessel." And they said, "Why, mother, they are all full." "And the oil stayed." It multiplied no more. Ah, there was a mistake in not having more empty vessels.

This pot of oil is God's symbol, in this allegory, for the faith of the human heart in him. It should always be upright toward him. It represents your heart, with its contents and possibilities, when living in a state of expectancy toward the eye of him who is always wanting, and seeking an opportunity to show himself a mighty Saviour.

Well, the prophet had said, "When you have done as I have said, come, and see me again," and so she went and told him the wondrous story. She had been so glad that she had almost forgotten about the dreadful Creditor. But it all came back in a moment of time. She heard his threats ringing in her ears and saw his stern face. She remembered how vainly she had plead her poverty, misery and loneliness. How he had said, "What is all

that unto me? You owe this debt, and it must be paid. I must, and I will have my money." That's the Creditor. I want you to see him in contrast with Elisha, the Lord that saves. The Creditor said, "I must have my money, or I'll take your two sons to be bondmen." He had a right to do it. When she told Elisha he did not say, "The mean scoundrel!" Abuse never pays a debt. He did not dispute his claim at all.

Now, the Creditor in this transaction, is a symbolic representation of Satan. He it is who "cometh as a wolf for to steal, to kill and to destroy." Sinner, look out, or he will foreclose his mortgage on you some day so quickly that it will make your head swim. There is only one ground on which you can escape his power, and that is the ground on which this woman came to Elisha—kinship. You cannot get rid of a debt; it must be paid. "The soul that sinneth, it must die." If it escapes the consequence of sin the ransom must be paid to redeem it. The sinner can no more pay the debt of sin than this woman could pay. The barrenness of that house, and its desolate condition, represents the desolation of all human hearts in a state of sin.

So, when she came again unto Elisha, her face was shining, and she said, "O, the oil poured, and poured out so beautifully! Directly all the vessels were filled. I never was so astonished." And Elisha said, "Go, sell the oil, and pay thy Creditor, and live thou and thy two sons of the rest."

There it is. The Creditor is satisfied when he gets his money. At any rate, his claim is settled. So, when the sinner and the backslider come unto God it is to claim relationship. Come saying, "O my God, Jesus Christ is my Redeemer, and I want him to be my Saviour also." That very hour, the "heart" being "sincere" "toward" him, the Holy Spirit begins to work on the little oil of faith in your "house," until all the empty vessels are filled.

The multiplied oil was all the Lord's work. She was to sell enough to pay the Creditor, and live of the rest—not off, but "of the rest." How shall I explain that? Let me show you. Jesus Christ says, "I came not into the world to be served, but to serve, and to give my life a ransom for the many." Ransom against what? Why, against Satan's claim on account of sin. He it is who hath "the power of death." He it is who drags men and women down to everlasting destruction. But, O men and women, the Ransomer takes hold on us not only to satisfy the Creditor's claim, but to dwell within us. Part of his power settles the debt, and part abides with us evermore. The Apostle Paul says, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Well, now the woman turned "toward" God; that is, toward Elisha, the representative of the Lord who saves. Remember that Jesus says, "He who

receives me, receives not me, but him who sent me." So when her heart turned toward Elisha it was becoming sincere, upright, perfect toward the Lord Jesus Christ. Her heart is now "perfect" in the sense of sincerely trusting in the Lord. Did she not go with a loving, glad heart? O, the oil, the multiplied oil, had made her a new creature. She is trusting and praising now. She is advancing toward the Lord, in a state of expectancy. When she first came she could only say, "My husband was the son of a prophet," but now she can say, "The Lord is my Saviour—he is my husband."

But in her darkest hours, the Lord was equally anxious "to show himself a strong Deliverer," but she did not turn her heart toward him, and did not call on him for succor. Oh, shall the Lord show himself strong in your behalf, brother, sister? You have got a little pot of oil; there is yet a little faith in your hour house. O bring it unto him. He is your kinsman, and all you have to do is to call on him, and claim kinship. All this woman did was to go to Elisha, and claim that her dead husband had been a son of a prophet. It was a very slim claim, a far-off relationship; but it was allowed. The eyes of the Lord were upon her, anxiously searching for some ground on which he could rightfully intervene and ransom her from the inexorable Creditor.

O, if she could come, and be received on such a claim as *that*, cannot you come, and claim the Saviour who gave his own *life* to become your

kinsman and Redeemer? He *is* your Redeemer, sinner ; will you not elect him, and confess him to be your Saviour also? There is no other on earth nor in Heaven who can save you ; he alone can pay your debt of sin, and secure to you the eternal life of God. Say to-night, "Jesus is my Redeemer, and I will now accept him as my Saviour." That moment the Holy Spirit will enter the little pot of oil, the oil of faith in your heart, and multiply it until you can say, "I live now by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Thus the power and life of Christ will settle the Creditor's claim, and he will raise you from the dead to live and reign with him forever in his everlasting kingdom. Amen.

CHRIST AT THE POOL.

“Wilt thou be made whole?”—St. John V., 6.

There are many things Satan does not want the human heart to understand. He seeks to confuse and to set us to thinking strangely about things we have no business to pother with. The most particular thing he wants us to deal with is the Sin question. As a man thinks, so he is.

Now, the Lord does not want us to dwell on the Sin question. He gives us another question, the consideration of which will deliver us out of sin—out of self. His problem for us is the Son question. S-o-n, son, is greater than S-i-n, sin. It is the greatest mistake in the world for a man to think about his sins. He should have none to think about. Let us quit thinking about sin and sins, and wrong-doing, and think about the Son of Man. Let's fix our minds on Heavenly, and not on earthly and devilish things. Then it will not be long until we shall get out of the woods. No man is so badly lost as the man who does not know he is lost. There are many so busy in the din of sin that they think of nothing beyond that.

It is not the cheating and the lying a man does that will send him into everlasting destruction. These things are harmful in themselves, and bring their own punishment in this life. But they are only

concomitants of a deep-seated constitutional disease. For hundreds of years physicians did not know that the blood circulated throughout the human body. It was left for a man named Harvey to make the discovery. Now everybody knows it, and believes it, and we are astonished that the scientists should have been ignorant of it so long. For two or three thousand years everybody believed the earth to be flat, and thought the sun revolved around it. Men were persecuted for advancing the idea of the earth being round. It is only a little while since physicians doctored fever as a disease, instead of treating it as a *symptom* of disease. Now an intelligent physician does not try to "break" a fever, but seeks to *aid it in its effort* to cast out the obstruction which produces it, and then the system rights itself, and the body resumes its normal functions.

So whenever we get out of our mind the thought Satan has put there, and get God's thought in, our spiritual and moral natures will resume the normal conditions of life.

Now, when Jesus came to Jerusalem, and went into the city by the sheep-gate, he saw a sight that would have touched the heart of any man. I have never gone into the wards of a hospital but that it had a saddening and a sickening effect upon me, to behold the misery and woe of suffering, sick humanity. There by the sheep-gate was a pool, called the Pool of Bethesda, which means, Pool of Effusion, or Pool of Mercy. Now and then its

water would well up, as if "troubled" by some angel, and "whosoever then *first* stepped in was healed of whatsoever disease he had." It was a type of the Lord Jesus, who is the Pool opened in David's House. God caused the water to bubble up out of the depths of the rocky mountain on which Jerusalem was built. A basin had been hewn out in the rock to catch and retain the water, with a drain-pipe to carry off the surplus. There was no power in the water to heal that any eye could see, yet the power was there, just as the blood circulated before any man made the discovery. By and by it was discovered, by whom or how we are not told, that whosoever first stepped into the pool, after the water was troubled, was healed of whatsoever disease he had. This was a great discovery. Many believed in it, and came and tried it, and proved it true. The fame of the pool spread far and wide.

So when Jesus came there that day, he saw a woful sight—one hard for him to witness, since, in a personal sense, he was unaccustomed to such sights. It was especially hard for him, because he knew that these five or six hundred men, women and children were all in that condition on account of Satan's lie. He knew it was the work of God and man's enemy, yet there were pious persons who put it all on God, and contended that he had afflicted them.

When Jesus saw the sight it smote him sore. If ever he was tempted to go beyond the limit given

him in his ministerial work, it must have been then and there. Oh, how he longed to unbind them and set them all free! But that must not be. Think of the restraining power he had to impose upon himself that hour. Of all he had to endure that was the hardest and severest test of his patience. We are apt to think when his disciples misunderstood him or forsook him, that that was the hardest to be borne. Well, that was hard, indeed. My own experience teaches me how to sympathize with Jesus in that. Oh, I never have trials and tribulations but that I go back and see how Jesus had such things to endure for me, and then I say, Praise the Lord!

Oh, how it must have afflicted him when his disciples neglected him, and men and women whom he had healed and blessed went back on him! But, lo! then he began to soar up from things of time and sense. An all-night on some mountain, in prayer, and he returned to talk more divinely fair, and took up his cross more gladly than before. Ah, it was the cross of human flesh and human offenses he bore for me.

But do not think this, great as it is, was the greatest trial Jesus endured. Lo, it was the cross of *not* doing what he was moved to do. Oh, the cross of not telling all he knew! To have the will, the heart, the courage and the power to do all things and yet not to do it. Not daring to go too far, lest he should make a miscarriage of his mission in the world.

There never was a being that trod this earth like Jesus Christ. He was in the likeness [form] of men, but oh, how unlike them! In our likeness, and yet no more like us than the brazen serpent on the pole was like the fiery serpents which bit and stung the people in the camp of Israel. Yet there were striking resemblances between the two.

Now, when Jesus beheld the suffering, scarred and marred humanity at the Pool of Bethesda, how intensely he remembered that Satan had done it all, in malicious spite, to keep God out of the hearts and lives of men! How he longed, by a word, to heal them all! But as that will not do, he takes the case which is typical of all the others. There is a man lying there in one of the five porches who has been incurably ill for thirty-eight years.

Everybody knew about him, and to take that case and heal him is a demonstration that he could heal all the others. This demonstration of compassion and power at the Pool of Bethesda has come down through all the ages, and you have it to-night just as fresh as it was that day. What an object lesson it is to the millions now living, and how it will strike the millions yet to be born of the flesh! and what countless numbers have felt its power who have passed away!

The Lord stood looking at the pool and the afflicted ones in the porches. So when Jesus saw this man—doubtless one of his disciples pointed him out, and told the history of his case—he was

moved with compassion ; that is, his attention was especially directed to and fixed upon this person, and he made up his mind to take him, and show forth the goodness and glory of God. Here he will give a world-embracing manifestation of Divine compassion and power, that One may speak for many—like One dying on the cross, that the many who receive him may live in him forever !

Now, there was a legend in Jerusalem and Judea about that pool. It was alleged, and believed by many, that at certain seasons an angel came down into the pool and troubled the water, and that whosoever then *first* stepped in was healed of whatsoever disease he had. No one had ever seen the angel, nor is there any account of how the legend began. In the Revised Version this part of this transaction is omitted. I think this is a mistake. I never understood St. John to endorse the story of the angel troubling the water ; but it belongs, historically, in the account. It was on account of *this belief* that many were healed in the pool.

The fame of this pool spread until a porch was built for the accommodation of the afflicted, and then another had to be built, and so on until there were five porches when the Lord stood there. There is no doubt about many having been healed there. The healing power was not in the quality of the water. No one thought of drinking it for that purpose. The healing took place by stepping into the pool soon after the water was "troubled," and

only the *first* person who then stepped in was healed. It was not, therefore, any mineral quality in the water. Yet scores had been healed there. The five porches testify unto this. They were not built in one year; but from time to time, over a period of years, just as the flocking of the sick created an imperative demand from the humane standpoint. Whether an angel came down into the pool, or whether it was troubled by natural causes, is a matter of no vital concern now. They who believed that an angel came, believed in God, and faith on the earth is so precious in his sight, that he healed them on their own terms of belief. However the pool was "troubled," it was by the *word* of the Lord the healing was accomplished. Now think of the poor man thirty-eight years in that condition! A whole generation of the world had passed into the grave during his affliction—a thousand million had died! His case was the most notorious one in the world. He had tried all the physicians, and every remedy, and now he has been coming unto this pool every day for weeks. He has seen the pool troubled time and again, and persons have been healed in his sight; but he has never been able to be the first one to step in. He cannot get in first by himself, and he has no one to put him in. He is too lowly and too poor for that.

I tell you, brethren, there are men, women and children in this city too deeply steeped in sin, too far gone on the road to ruin, ever to be able of

themselves to step into the Pool of Mercy. They are waiting and hoping some one may yet lend them a helping hand. Have you not observed the absolute selfishness of human nature? At this Pool of Bethesda there is a mother with her child. There is not much the matter with it, but it must be put in before him. There is a wife with her husband, and a husband with his wife; a brother with his sister, and a sister with her brother; a friend with a friend; but the man who needed healing most of all had no one to put him in. No one cares enough for him to make a sacrifice of self, and this is the serpent of sin.

Ah me, is it not full time the angel of the Covenant, the angel of the Pool of Mercy should come? Yes, the eye of God is over all, and is open to see every deed and thought. Not a sparrow falls but he sees it, and knows it. Even the very hairs of my head are numbered. Neither father nor mother cared enough to count the hairs of my head, but my God in Christ knows them all. Now, when God saw the faith of those gathered at this pool, it gave him a little ground on which to work. Wherever he can see an open door of faith in the human mind he comes in. And oh, in the fullness of time, in the providence of Almighty God, there came the angel of the Lord God, and stood by the Pool of Bethesda, the Lord Jesus Christ himself. The Saviour of sinners stood there, in broad daylight, and the Pool of Bethesda became the Pool of Mercy. As he looks

down on the scene of suffering his heart of compassion is moved within him, and he approached, and said unto the friendless man, "Wilt thou be made whole?" That's a very simple and touching question—it is the Son question—"Would you like to be made sound and well?" That's the way the Lord puts all his questions and promises, and "yes" is the proper answer to all of them. I never knew him to say "no" to any of his true disciples. It is all "yes" and "amen" in him.

Simple as the question is, the man does not give the true answer, "yes." "Would you like to be made whole?" Thirty-eight years in that condition, and yet he could not answer, "yes." O sinner, do you not see yourself in this? He does not understand who Jesus is, but he is not afraid. He looked him in the face, and instantly thought, "Here is the man who will put me into the pool." And so, instead of saying, "yes," he begins to tell how unfortunate he is: "Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool; but while I am coming another steppeth down before me." Truly this is heart-rending. But his faith in the troubled pool is great, and on *that*, the type of himself, Jesus can act, and so he said unto him, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." Instantly the man felt strange moving sensations, for over the word came the power to do what he commanded, and straightway, forthwith, immediately, the man "was made whole." It takes the three words to

express the full meaning. He arose, folded up his little bed, and walked away, through the city, shouting. First, he looked around to see him who had wrought this marvellous cure, but he could not see him anywhere, "for Jesus had conveyed himself away." "Conveyed himself away!" I sat down at that. I got my concordance and I searched the Bible, to see if any other passage would throw any light on it. I said, "Lord, I know this means something, and I want to know it," and I waited on him until I did understand it. We can all know the hidden things when our minds and hearts are prepared. You cannot teach a child the alphabet all at once. There are many processes, and every one has its steps, even in the physical world, and so it is in spiritual and Heavenly things, for that which is seen is only a picture of the true things in the unseen world.

Now, above all things, this man wanted to thank and adore him, but when he turned round to do so he was gone! The man was so bewildered that he knew not what to think. The more he thought the more the wonder grew; but he did what he was commanded to do—he took up his bed and *walked*. The mystery surrounding the transaction did not hinder him from realizing that he was sound and well.

The Scripture declares that Jesus "conveyed himself away." He did not walk away, nor dodge, nor slip away, but *he* "conveyed himself away"; that is, he disappeared miraculously, instantaneously,

just as he did when Manoah made an offering before him. But the manner of his disappearance does not concern us so much as the reason for it. It was because of "the multitude [of sick] being in that place." If he had remained to receive the homage of that man, all the sick, lame, halt, blind and withered in the five porches would have been at his feet, imploring him to heal them also. He could not have denied them, and then you and I would have missed our salvation. *That* is the reason the Lord "conveyed himself away." He could not remain, and deny them.

Now, this was done on the Sabbath, and as the healed man went on his way rejoicing, carrying his bed, some very pious persons came along, and said, "Don't you know this is the Sabbath day, and that it is not right for you to be carrying your bed, and making all this ado?" That's "religion," brethren. I would not give a fig for it. Jesus Christ did not come to give the world a code of morals, nor yet to establish a religion. He came to give health and life—eternal life, peace and joy—to give himself. So the man said, "He that made me whole, the same said unto me, 'Take up thy bed and walk.'" That was enough for him, and enough for me. Jesus is Lord of all.

Afterward Jesus found his man in the temple, and said unto him, "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." I love to think of Jesus taking the trouble to find this man.

Here is the philosophy of Heaven and of life. "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." That's God's truth. It cuts right through Satan's lie, "Thou shalt not die." Remember how I said, in the beginning, that we have no business with the Sin question. As a man thinks, he is. Thought of wrong always lies back of wrong acting. So the Lord said, "Sin no more." It does not require an angel to tell what this means.

Sin got him into that condition thirty-eight years. The Son got him out of it. Then the Lord tells him to "sin no more," lest it, sin, should bring him into a worse condition. The Lord has undone what Satan did. He seeks to keep him from falling under his dominion again. Hence it is easy to see that all suffering of body and of mind is the work of Satan. He it is who "hath the power of death." There is no death in God. He is the life-giver; he is love; his gift is eternal life, and a glorious body unto every one who believes on his Son. Christ Jesus is become a Door, through which any sinner may enter, and be a saint evermore. He who said, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk," also said unto us all, "*I am the Door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.*" There is no other condition attached. It is *not* added, "if he shall hold out faithful unto death," or "if he shall sin no more." Praise the dear Lord for that. The one condition is *belief in his word and entrance by the Door.* The Door saves.

Satan says, "That is too easy and too good to be true." He is a liar. If you believe his lie you will die by it. If you believe the Lord's word you will live by it forever. Mark, it was "afterward," and not before, the Lord said, "Behold, thou art made whole; sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee." This was said to warn him against Satan. When he was yet sick he said unto him, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." Here is no condition but obedience in arising. The power *to* arise was in the *word* of command. He "was made whole" *to* arise; he did not get up *to be* made whole. He would have arisen even if Jesus had not said, "Arise and walk." That was said to show the man that it is the *word* that healed him, and that it was *instantaneous*. It is the Son of Man willing and speaking health and life into the man. So the sinner is saved who *enters in by the Door*, and is not saved because he is never to misbehave afterward. Certain things depend on good service *in* the kingdom, but it is not salvation from hell; it is not being cured of Satan's sting, but being kept in a state of safety and health.

Sickness and death and hell are on account of sin. Christ came into the world to deliver sinners out of all this woe. He gives unto all who believe this, life eternal. It is God's gift through the Son of Man. O sinner, would you like to be saved? Unto you Jesus saith, "Come unto *Me* and I will *give* you rest." All you need is to have confidence

enough in him to arise and come unto him. How quickly and easily this can be done !

Why, he came into the world not to condemn, but to save sinners. He gave his life to make it so. He said unto the worst sinner in Capernaum, "Follow me." He arose and followed him. The Lord soon changed his whole nature, and he became the evangelist who wrote Matthew's gospel. He has greater things for you, sinner, if you shall enter in by the Door.

THE BARREN WOMAN.

“And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hands of the Philistines forty years. And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her: Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not; but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: for lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head; for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”—Judges XIII., 1-5.

My discourse to-night is founded on the transaction and statements recorded in the thirteenth chapter of Judges.

The functions of the human body are not one, but many. Our desires and hopes are not one, but manifold. There is not one, but five senses. When we look abroad in the material world, we observe manifold manifestations of life. If you look into a garden, what a variety of flowers and plants, and shapes and colors. The occasions to attract attention and the organs to receive impressions are so numerous in this life, that there ensues great distraction and confusion. Bloom ends in decay; youth in age; life in death. The cradle but leads to the tomb. It need not, then, be wondered at

that the Lord tries to make himself understood by types, figures, symbols, emblems, and all manner of speech, seizing on every variety of human relationship to convey a knowledge of Truth and Spirit, as revealed in the old picture book. Otherwise how shall we account for such things as I have read you to-night? What in the world can this barren woman who lived nearly three thousand years ago, have to do with us, or with Israel being "sinful in the sight of the Lord"? I want to show you that we are all concerned in this woman. She is a type in her barrenness, by which the Lord shows us who it is that gives joy and life to those who are spiritually barren. Did you notice particularly the first and second verses of this chapter? The first verse refers only to Israel, who did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and were, as a consequence of sin, conquered by the Philistines; but the second verse says: "And there was a certain man of Zorah, a Danite, whose name was Manoah, and his wife was barren, and bare not."

Now, if we look at the mere letter of this Scripture, it killeth, and you miss the divine calling. The letter of this is nonsense. What connection can there be between Israel's national sin and bondage and Manoah's barren wife? But here it is, recorded on the sacred page and preserved when all contemporaneous history has perished, that Manoah had a barren wife. The Lord hath done this that you and I might have it to-night. As long as the

world goes on as it now is, this record will live for the instruction of those who have eyes to see "a light that shineth out of darkness."

"Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord." First of all, consider: It was impossible for Israel to sin, and not sin in the sight of the Lord; secondly, consider: Israel's bondage under "the hand of the Philistines" was due to the "evil" which separated them from the Lord. Wherefore, Israel was barren and helpless in bondage. The barren woman is a type of Israel's condition in a single person! She had a husband; yet she was barren. Israel had a husband; yet Israel was barren. Spiritually, Israel denotes the Church, the Spouse of Christ. Every member of the Body of the Lord Christ is that Church. That barren woman was Israel, as well as the nation itself.

The Lord introduces this woman on the stage of action, because, in her domestic condition, she denotes human nature without fellowship and life with God, through the Lord Jesus Christ. In relation to Israel as a nation, she is a type of their bondage forty years to the Philistines, who represent the children of the devil. Manoah was the woman's husband; the Lord is Israel's husband.

What a sad condition that woman was in; she was now greatly distressed on account of her condition. She had been in that way forty years. She was a marked woman. Everybody knew her condition. She was blessed with wifehood, but

not motherhood. She is fruitless. She misses her calling. She cannot be what she is a wife for. As far as her present situation is concerned, it would have been better if she had no husband. For her husband is an outward witness of her barrenness. It would be better, sinner, if you should die in your sins, that you had no Redeemer. To have a Redeemer and refuse him as Saviour, makes him an unwilling witness of your ruin.

Now, dear friends, this barren woman goes out in the field, and is all alone there. The field is the world. She is all alone. Where else could she go? She feels that she is a deep disappointment to her husband. She loathes herself. The fellowship that once existed between them is broken. Estrangement crept in; then coldness; then separation. How sad and awful this creature's condition is! If you had heard her neighbors talk, you would have felt sorry for her. But human sympathy does her no good. It cannot cure her barrenness. That awful, ever-present fact embitters her life. Ah, there is a loneliness of heart, of spirit, about which we cannot talk! O brother, sister, sinner, have you not at some time of your life felt this isolation of heart? How you would have lifted yourself out of it if you only could have done so, but you could not. If you have not yet had this bitter experience, be assured it will yet come to you.

This barren woman is like Israel, bound. No hand on earth can unbind her. Look out, that the Philis-

tines do not overcome you also ! Oh, awful is the barrenness which comes when you sin in the sight of the Lord ! I pray God, none of you may ever become this woman.

She was sitting alone in the field one day, when a man of God came unto her. She felt embarrassed. She did not see him until he stood before her. She much preferred to be alone. O brethren, I have been in that state of mind, where I preferred to be alone ; where the presence, even the sight of fellow-beings was only a torment and added loneliness. Such was the condition of this poor woman. Oh, yes, she had a husband. The trouble was not in him ; it was in her. It was not in the water, nor in the air, nor in the sky. It was in the woman. Let me tell you, friends, we never get into trouble, but what the wrong is in us. The same thing that caused Israel's trouble, caused this woman's trouble and yours. She now knew the trouble was in her. It took twenty years to be convinced of it. For years she would not believe it. She sought for it everywhere but in her barren self. She blamed her husband ; she blamed God. But now she knows and confesses that she is barren, because the principle of fruitfulness is not in her. Ah, that is the exact thing that Christ comes to convince us all of. "Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it ; but, whosoever will lose his life, for my sake, the same shall save it."

The woman was barren—dead. There was her husband to witness against her, even when he did

not want to, and was himself broken by her barrenness. Let me tell you something, sin is always in the mind first. You always think wrong before you do evil in the sight of the Lord. Thought lies back of action. If the thought is evil, the action will be bad ; if the thought is good, the action will be right. I went into a church by a window to-day, and brought out a roll of papers, and it was no theft ; another man might do the same thing, and it would be theft. One man killed another to-day, and it was murder. To-morrow, a man may kill another, and it would be no murder at all. You never do wrong until you think wrong.

“Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord.” The barren woman, sitting there alone in the field, had thoughts that carried her out of herself, and lo, a man of God stood before her. She did not know him. Often we have visitations and have not eyes to see who it is. The man of God spake unto her, and said, “Behold, now thou art barren.” That was no news to her ; but he said something else—something she never expected to hear : “But thou shalt conceive and bare a son.” And then he described the son to her. “No razor shall come on his head ; for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb ; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines.” There is a Son of Promise. The barren woman’s son is to be a partial deliverer of Israel. Thus we see how the barren woman is connected with Israel, and under the

quickening power of God is to give birth to Israel's deliverer. He, like Isaac, the son of the barren Sarah, and John the Baptist, the son of a barren woman, is to be a forerunner, and in some respects a type of Christ, the Son of the Virgin.

But the man of God gave her instructions how she was to conduct herself meanwhile. She must "beware" of certain things. His charge to her was very emphatic and solemn. She was to drink no wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. Ah, if this divinely given hygiene was strictly obeyed by all mothers, there would be few boys and girls born into the world deformed and warped; the boys to go through lines of dissipation into gutters, jails and penitentiaries; and the girls by a harder route, into worse places. When the Lord uses us, we are not to "drink wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing." "Know ye not, brethren, that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit?" "If any man destroy the temple of God, him shall God destroy." The barren woman longs to have a son, but cannot until the Lord comes unto her, and says, "But thou shalt conceive and bare a son." Spiritually we are all in her condition, until the Lord comes unto us, and we are begotten of God and born of the Spirit. She was not fit to be the mother of such a son, and so the angel of the Lord had to tell her what *not* to do, lest she, by intemperate living, should contaminate her unborn offspring. Oh, I pity the men and women that go wilfully to

ruin ; they come into the world with ruined natures, with vicious appetites and devilish tempers. God knows it. You and I do not know how we are suffering for what we cannot help. Oh, how often we do the things we hate. How often we resolve never to do so again, and go and do it over the first good opportunity. Whipping yourself for it will do no good. By nature we are just as barren as this barren woman. She is to have a son ; but she does not even know how to conduct herself during her pregnancy. There is not one woman in a thousand that knows unto this day. It is the shame of our age and civilization. Who understands, "For he shall be a Nazarite from the womb" ? Let every woman in the land who does not understand that, hide her face with shame ; put her hand on her mouth, and her mouth in the dust. That is a thousand times better than the useless whining and praying and mourning that is done over prodigal sons and depraved daughters. Truly, every mother's son or daughter should be a "Nazarite unto God from the womb." Nazarite means *consecrated*.

As soon as the man of God took his departure, the barren woman ran unto her husband. She could go to him now, for she had glad news to tell him. The woman that is to become the mother of Samson can well go to her husband with the news. The son on whose "head no razor shall come" is "to begin to deliver Israel." The promise is limited ; but it is a great one. Israel must serve the Philistines without

any hope until the barren woman's son is born, and grows to be twenty years of age. And yet the Philistines are God's enemies, because they are Israel's enemies. But they would not turn unto the Lord and bring their barren, perishing lives unto him, and he did the best he could for them through the barren wife of Manoah, the Danite. They had the lesson and sight of the barren woman and her Son of Promise, and the miracle of the burnt-offering, and turned not unto the Lord. Well, the angel of the Lord told her first how to deal with herself, and thus it will be with us when the Lord visits us. We are to be consecrated unto him. Oh, let us who have been born again be Nazarites unto God! The woman did not know the Lord was coming; and when he stood before her, and told her these things, she did not know him. She took him to be some prophet. She told her husband that he was a "man of God," and that "his countenance was like the countenance of an angel, very terrible." It was so gloriously fair that she was filled with awe and wonder. She did not know what to say, and forgot to ask him his name, or even to thank him. Manoah thought that would never do; and so he began to entreat the Lord, and said, "O my Lord, let the man of God, which thou didst send, come again unto us, and teach us what *we* shall *do* unto the child that shall be born."

Manoah means rest. But he was not Manoah until the Lord appeared, and he believed in the Son

of Promise. He was thence Manoah, because the Lord had given his house, his family, Rest. Now, he knew from *whom* the Man of God had come, and he asked the *Lord* to send him again. He wanted to see him, and be a little more assured about it. He had a desire to ask a whole lot of questions, and wanted to pother about how *they* should *do* unto the child that should be born. You know how curious we are about things, and how we want to meddle even in the Lord's affairs. Ah, what untold miseries we make for ourselves by trying to help the Lord do his own work! Well, the Lord hearkened unto Manoah's prayer; but came unto the woman, and not unto the man. She went out into the field again, and sat there alone in the same spot. She said, "It may be he will come this way again." And lo, one day, as she was sitting there waiting for him, he stood before her again, and she recognized him as the same person who had come with the son-message. She arose at once, and ran and called her husband. And Manoah arose and went after his wife, and came to the Man of God, and said unto him, "Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman?" And he said, "I am." Manoah said, "Now, let thy words come to pass. How shall *we* order the child? How shall *we* do unto him?" Brethren, the meddlesomeness of this man makes me shudder. The Heavenly messenger did not deign to answer his impertinent, but anxious inquiries, but said, "Of all I have said unto the woman, let *her*

beware." Then he repeated over what he had said *she* should *not* do; and added, "All that I commanded her, let her observe." Thus he shows where the responsibility for that child, in his temper and disposition, lies until he is born. If he comes into the world with any distemper, it will be because the woman does not "observe to obey all the Lord commanded her." Now they did not know that they were dealing with the "angel of the Lord," that is, with the Lord himself; but they did know that they were talking with a "Man of God." So, Manoah said, "I pray thee, let us detain thee until we shall make ready a kid before thee." This is a proffer of worship; so as they did not know him in his true character, the angel of the Lord said, "Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread, and if thou wilt offer a burnt-offering, thou must offer it unto the Lord." Nothing abashed by this stinging response, Manoah prepared his offering and insisted on knowing the name of his unwilling guest, saying that he wanted to honor him when his saying should be fulfilled. The angel of the Lord said unto him, "Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is Wonderful?"

How stupid Manoah is! Though he told him his name he did not have ears to hear it. "Why askest thou my name, seeing it is Wonderful?"

That is one of the names of the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah prophetically declared, "Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the gov-

ernment shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." So it was the Lord himself who appeared unto the barren woman, and in giving a son unto her prefigured his own birth of the Virgin woman.

Manoah prepared his altar of twelve pieces of wood and crossed them upon a rock, and when it was ready, and as they three stood looking on, the Lord "did wondrously." He had said, "I will not eat thy bread." He never sups with those who do not have eyes to see who he is, much less with those who do not know his name when he tells it. He never eats bread with the unbeliever. As they stood there, around Manoah's altar, the Lord caused fire to come out of the rock, and consumed his burnt-offering. As "the flame ascended up toward Heaven," "the Lord" ascended in the flame of the altar, and they saw him no more.

What do you think the poor man and his wife did? They fell on their faces, and for the first time realized that they had been face to face with the angel of the Lord. Manoah began to moan and groan, and cry at a fearful rate, and finally managed to say unto his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen God!" But the woman who was barren, to whom the Lord had said, "Thou shalt be barren no more; thou shalt have a son," said unto her distracted husband: "Don't think that way about it; don't you see if the Lord was not pleased

with us he would not have accepted our offering, nor have said such strange and wonderful things about giving us a son?" And he was comforted, and became *Manoah* from that moment.

This woman will hence be a type of barren Israel no more, but a type of the saint, or church, in its fruitfulness. Remember how the Lord said unto his disciples, "I am the vine, and ye are the branches; he that abideth in me and I in him beareth much fruit; but severed from me ye can do nothing. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples."

So, brethren, the woman is now a symbol of the fruitful Christian, of the disciple who abideth in the Vine. The life of the Vine flowing out unto him, makes him a fruitful son. Oh, that you may all understand these things to-night! May these truths multiply themselves in your spiritual nature, so that in the day of his coming he shall be able to receive you with great joy, and that you may not be ashamed to meet him. Oh, that he may be enabled to present every one of you without spot, wrinkle, or blemish! Lord Jesus, may these things come to pass in the hearts of these men and women to thy name's honor and glory! Amen.

SAMSON THE NAZARITE.

1. "And the woman bare a son, and called his name Samson; and the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan, between Zorah and Ashtaol." 2. "And the spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily," repeated four times. 3. "And he wist not that the Lord was departed from him."

To-night I call your attention to the transactions recorded in Judges, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth chapters, inclusive. Four times it is recorded in this history that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson mightily," and afterwards that "the Lord was departed from him, and he knew it not." Twenty years lie between the first and third declarations of the text. What a condition this man came to! I believe there are men and women in that condition to-day. There are preachers preaching who have lost the power of the Holy Spirit, and are so self-sufficient that they know it not.

This man was a Danite and a Nazarite. He was the son of Manoah's barren wife, who bare not until the Lord appeared unto her and promised her this son, and gave her minute instructions how to conduct herself during the period of her pregnancy; just the knowledge the world so much needs to-day. She was "to beware, and eat no unclean thing, and drink neither wine nor any strong drink." This, of course, excluded temper, evil thoughts and loud

behavior. It means seclusion and consecration in the fear and service of God. If these divine instructions were observed by the women nowadays, there would not be near so many vicious boys and wayward girls going to ruin. The mischief begins before birth. I know that this woman disobeyed the "beware" of the Lord by the wilful and licentious disposition of her son.

All Israel looked for the birth of her son, and when born he was the wonder of the age. His name was Samson, or Shimshon, which means "a little sun," or "a little ministry," for the Lord had said, "He shall *begin* to deliver Israel from the hand of the Philistines." They were a tribe of giants. Goliath was a Philistine, but only one of many. Everybody was afraid of them. They were haughty and insolent. The Lord commanded that "no razor was ever to come on Samson's head." His hair was the sign to the world that he was a Nazarete from his mother's womb. He was now twenty years of age, and in the military camp of Dan, when "the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times." Here he conceived the idea of going down to Timnath, and there he was captivated by a Philistine woman. He returned home, without making war, as he had intended, and said unto his parents, "I have seen a woman in Timnath; now, therefore, get her for me to wife." They said, "Why, son, that won't do; you must not think of that Philistine woman. Are there no fair daughters

in Israel, that you must take a wife of the uncircumcised Philistines?" The same rule holds good to-day. No Christian has any right to marry an unbeliever. The greatest mischief comes out of God's children going into Philistia to marry and to hold fellowship. This is the Church arm-in-arm with the World.

But Samson said, "*Get her for me; she pleases me well.*" This is what the mother imparted unto him before he was born. They yielded, and went with him to negotiate for the wife. Their sorrow is come. On one of these trips, as Samson passed a mountain gorge, a young lion came out and roared against him. "And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily," and he seized the lion by the jaws with his hands, and rent it as if it had been a kid, and cast the carcass aside; but he said not a word about it, not even unto his father or mother.

It had been arranged that he was to marry the Philistine woman, and he and his parents were going down to Timnath to take her, when Samson turned aside to see the carcass of the lion, and, lo! there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass, and "he took thereof with his hands, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them and they did eat, but he told them not from whence it came." We see here something subtle and deceitful.

He gave a seven days' wedding feast, and thirty young men of the Philistines came to be his companions, and one acted as his "best man," or

groomsman. On the first day of the feast, Samson said unto them, "I will now put forth a riddle ; if you guess it before the feast is over I will give you thirty change of garments, but if you fail, then you *shall* give me thirty change of garments." They agreed, and said, "Put forth your riddle." He said, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

They pothered over it three days, and could make nothing out of it. Then they called Samson's wife, and said unto her privately, "Entice thy husband, that he may tell you, and you tell us his riddle." When she said she did not like to do it, they said, "Do it, or we will burn thee and thy father's house with fire. We didn't come here to be robbed." She was greatly frightened, and began to entice Samson, and teased and worried him, until, for the sake of peace, he told her, and then she told her countrymen.

On the last day of the seven they said unto Samson, "What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" He cast a furious glance at his wife, and said, "If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not guessed my riddle." This is a pretty mess, indeed, for Manoah's son, and a Nazarete unto God to be in! The Philistine woman, who pleased him so well, has got him into trouble before the honeymoon is over.

That night Samson slipped away, and went to Ashkelon, and slew thirty Philistines, and robbed

them of their garments, and gave them unto the thirty young men who had ploughed with his heifer. Their consternation was very great. Samson immediately abandoned his wife, and hastened back to the camp of Dan. This exploit and that of the lion filled that section with his renown. Israel had great expectations.

These events occurred in the spring. In the harvest time, as the Philistines had made no effort to pursue him, he returned to Timnath with a kid, as a peace-offering, and said he would go in unto his wife, but her father forbade him, saying that he had given her to his companion, thinking he had utterly hated and abandoned her. Samson looked dark and wrathful, and the father said, "There is her younger sister, fairer than she; take her, and be satisfied." But he would not, and went off, and gathered together three hundred foxes, and tied them two and two, and "put a firebrand in the midst of two tails," and in the night time brought them and turned them loose in their cornfields and vineyards. A great and destructive conflagration ensued. The whole section was ablaze. Samson fled to his own country, and when he heard that the Philistines had burnt his wife and her father, and were marching an army to make war, he took shelter in the cleft on the top of the rock Etam. "The Philistines pitched in Judah, and spread themselves in Lehi." The men of Judah came out to meet them, and said, "Why are ye come against us?"

And they said, "To bind Samson, and do unto him as he has done unto us." So to appease them, and to avoid war, they agreed to deliver Samson over to them, bound. Three thousand men of Judah marched down to the rock Etam and demanded that Samson should surrender. He said, "I will if you will not kill me yourselves." They bound themselves by an oath not to harm him, but only to bind and deliver him thus to the Philistines, and then he surrendered. When he was delivered unto them the Philistines sent up a great shout against him, and began to march off with him in triumph.

They had not gone far when "the Spirit of the Lord came upon Samson mightily," and the cords that were upon his arms and limbs "became as flax that is burnt with fire." The Philistines were amazed, and, before they could recover from their daze, he had seized the moist [green] jawbone of an ass, and set upon them with such strength and fury that he slew a thousand men, and utterly routed them.

Overcome with thirst and fatigue, Samson threw away the jaw and lay down on the ground. He was sore athirst, and cried unto the Lord, saying, "Thou hast given me this great deliverance, and now shall I die of thirst, and fall into the hands of the Philistines?" Then "the Lord clave a hollow place in the jaw, and there came water thereout."

This is one of the passages of Scripture which infidels scoff, saying, "How in the world could

water come out of that jawbone? Is it not enough to kill a thousand men with it?" The water did *not* come out of the jawbone, but out of a hollow place in the ground, called "the jaw." The place was named "Lehi," which means "the jaw," or the place of the battle of the jaw, jawbone. Samson named the spot where he threw the jaw down "Ramath-lehi," which signifies "place of casting away the jawbone." The spring, or well, which God caused to burst forth is a type of the pierced side of our Lord on the cross. Samson named this well En-hak-kore, "the well of him that called."

The fame of Samson was now so great that he was chosen ruler, "and judged Israel twenty years." He seems to have gone pretty well for many years, with only occasional outbreaks; but finally he got off on the old trouble. He saw a Philistine woman, and fell in love with her. She lived in the valley of Sorek, and her name was Delilah, which means consumer, and denotes the flesh. This is his third love affair with a Philistine woman. He went out seeking to gratify his fleshly desires. While the Spirit of the Lord came upon him mightily at times, he was not "led by the Spirit," but by the flesh.

His visits to Delilah soon became notorious, and attracted the attention of the entire region. Seeing what a slave he was to her, the lords of the Philistines came to visit her, and said, "Entice him to

tell thee wherein his great strength lies, and we will give thee, every one of us [five], eleven hundred pieces of silver." She quickly entered into the conspiracy. She began operations at once, and said unto him, "Look here, Samson, you pretend to love me, but I don't believe a word of it." He said, "Oh, yes, I do; I love you better than any woman I ever knew, and you have no right to talk that way to me." She said, "Oh, well, you have never told *me* the secret of your great strength; you don't trust me." And he said, "Is that all? I'll tell *you*. If I should be bound with *green* withs, that *never have been dried*, I should be as weak as any other man."

She made all her arrangements, having men hid in the chamber to capture or slay him, and waited until he was asleep, and then she bound him with *green* withs, and cried, "Samson, the Philistines are upon thee." He arose, and "brake the withs as if they had been tow touched by fire." She explained to him that she had bound him to find out whether he had told her the truth!

O friends, it will never do to go down into the land where that woman lives! That's no place for a *consecrated* man, for that is what *Nazarite* means. It means just what every Christian is. He was a Nazarite; God called him so, and that made it so. But here is the Nazarite Samson in Delilah's bed. She is after his Nazarite secret. Will he betray *it*, as well as disgrace his sacred calling? Well, he is

the most wilful creature ever born. His disobedient mother gave him that disposition. The boys and girls going wilfully wrong are born with it in them. This lesson is written to show us this, and show how wilful even a Nazarite can be, and thus lose his power and come to grief too deep to live in it. Delilah renewed her importunities, and gave him no rest. She finally told him she would have no more to do with him if he did not confide in her. She said, "You have mocked me and told me lies." So he said, "If I should be bound fast with *new* ropes, that were *never occupied*, then I shall be as weak as any other man." She awaited an opportunity and bound him thus, and cried, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson." Samson arose and broke the ropes as if they had been threads.

She now railed against him furiously, and pouted and would not speak for several hours. Therefore he said, "Come to, I *will* tell you truly *this* time. If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web, and fasten it with the pin, I would be helpless." She thought *this* might prove true. She got everything ready, put him to sleep, and wove his seven golden locks into the web of the loom, and fastened it with the pin, and cried out, "Samson, the Philistines be upon thee." And lo, he arose with ease and carried off the pin and the beam with the web by the hair of his head. So he had lied to her the third time.

She now determined to break with him, and ordered him to leave, and never come back again. She had lost all confidence in him, and would rather die of a broken heart than have him around deceiving and mocking her. He thought she was in earnest. She saw her advantage, and pressed him daily, and it grieved and worried him, "and his soul [spirit] was vexed unto death," and he told her all his heart, and said unto her: "There has not come a razor upon mine head, for I am a Nazarite unto God from my mother's womb; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I will be as weak as any other man."

As soon as she saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent for the Philistine lords, and they came and brought the silver for which she had agreed to betray Samson into their power. Oh, how cruel is the woman that entices! She is abroad in every land, and enticing men all over the world. She is a consumer, and brings to poverty every man she pollutes. As soon as Delilah had arranged all the details of the conspiracy, she fondled Samson and put him to sleep on her lap, and then she called for a man, and he shaved off the seven locks of his head. The deed is done. Then she cried, "Samson, the Philistines be upon thee." He awoke out of his sleep, rubbed his eyes, and said, "I'll go out and shake myself, and scare the Philistines out of sight;" but he did not yet know that "the power of the Lord was departed from him." As he began

to realize it, and felt that his locks were gone, he felt faint and dizzy, and sank helplessly down. The liers-in-wait rushed out and seized him and bound him and carried him off in triumph to Gaza, where they rebound him in fetters of brass, bored his two eyes out, and put him in a prison house.

To such poverty and affliction hath Delilah brought this hero of physical prowess. Never before and never since was seen such an exhibition of physical power on this earth. He confounded the world. Perhaps you have seen pictures of Samson, which represented him as a John C. Heenan, or a John L. Sullivan, with great muscles standing out on his arms as an evidence of strength. Well, that is a total misconception. He was not like that at all. He was but little above the medium size of an ordinary man; rather broad-shouldered, slender-waisted and spindle-shanked, with light blue eyes; a low, broad, smooth forehead; a complexion very fair and ruddy, and a wondrous head of golden hair dressed up in seven locks, of which he was very proud. A man with that head of hair could not possibly be an athlete. He was a ladies' man. The marvel of his strength was enhanced and emphasized by his medium and delicate stature. His strength was in his Nazarization from the womb, and in the Spirit of the Lord coming upon him as a sequence of his consecration. His weakness was in the Flesh, which brought him to the arms of Delilah the Consumer. She did unto him what all

the warriors of Philistia could not do. Why the Lord gave him such marvellous physical strength is an open question. Perhaps it was given to the age in which he lived, to teach Israel, as well as the Philistines, that strength does not belong unto giants, but unto the Lord.

But there he is in prison, shorn of his eyes, his locks and his strength. First of all, he lost his strength; then his hair; then his liberty; then his eyes; then his life. But, back of all this outward misery and degradation were all the wilful thoughts and steps which led him down to Timnath. The Lord was Samson's strength; the Flesh his weakness. This is true of us all. How helpless and pitiful is Samson's plight! Oh, what a sight to weep over is this Nazarite unto God. The Scripture says that "he wist not that the *Lord* had departed from him." That is to be understood in the sense in which we say: Lo, the sun sets; when, in fact, the sun never sets and never rises. The motions of the earth only make it apparently so. So the passions of Samson cut him off from the Lord, and the power of the Spirit came not over the broken line, in the betrayal of his Nazarite sign of strength. But, mark you, he was a Nazarite under all circumstances. Neither polluted conduct, nor betrayal of the sign given, could undo or annul the *word of the Lord*. He was God's man all the time—all the way. But, alas, to see the man who *lifted up* the jawbone of an ass and slew a thousand Philistines, shorn of his

locks, his two eyes bored out, and grinding in a prison house. For they hitched him up to a sweep, and made him grind like an ox at the sweep of an old-fashioned mill.

There was universal rejoicing in Philistia, and universal grief in Israel. The Philistines gathered together for a national celebration in the temple of Dagon, and offered a great sacrifice unto Dagon, saying, "Our god hath delivered Samson, our enemy, into our hands." The temple was crowded below and above, three thousand being on the flat roof, to look down on the celebration. They were having a high time, and began to be very merry, when some one said, "Let's bring out Samson from the prison house, that he may make sport for us." And they brought him out, and placed the blind Samson in the midst of the temple. There they mocked and guyed him as he was led about by a lad. Dear brethren, let's never get into such a place! But, let me tell you, one and all, if you forget your Nazarite vow, and betray the secret of the presence of the Lord, Satan will soon take you captive and put your two eyes out, and then make you believe that, because you cannot see the Lord, he has departed from you. Don't any of you dare to go down into the polluted land of the Philistines. Beware of Delilah! Poor Samson! What thoughts and regrets he had. What a fool he had been not to have seen all this from the beginning! And, above all, to have loved and trusted the treacherous Delilah! See him as he stands

panting there in Dagon's temple! How the shouts and jeers ring in his ears! And if he had had his eyes to see, he would have beheld Delilah there too. She occupied a reserved seat, and shared the honors with Dagon, and was much thought of.

But the Lord's eyes were upon Samson all the time. The Lord never really left him. It was Samson who did all the leaving. That's why I tell you the story of all his woes. I want to show you how good God is in the Lord Jesus Christ. For all this, from the uplifting of the mighty jawbone unto the fallen and dying Samson, must be a dim picture, a prefigurement of the uplifting of Jesus on the Roman cross. You know he was spit upon, blindfolded; crowned with thorns; put in purple robes, and mocked and scoffed and scourged; he who knew *no sin*; and was cruelly crucified that he might atone for Samson's and sinners' sins.

Oh, how sadly Samson now regrets the *first* step that led him to Timnath! *That* led to all *this*. Look back to your boyhood days and remember the first wrong step, and the deception it took to cover it up? It is the *first* wrong that lasts so long.

So they go on and on with *their* sport and merry-making. Everybody there but Samson was *so* merry. There was not a cloud in sight. No one was afraid of Samson now. Even the boys and girls tease and prod him, saying, "Won't you give us one of your fine curls?" "Where is your jawbone now?" "Wouldn't you like to see Delilah?" They

had placed him between the two principal pillars on which the temple rested, as the best place to show him. He asked the lad who led him to let him rest against the pillar. He looked so weary and as if about to faint; so he showed him where the pillars stood, and he leaned against them. After a little, he put forth his left, and then his right arm, and found where the pillars were, and called within himself, saying, "O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me only this once, O God, that I may be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes, and let me die with the Philistines." The Lord heard his cry, and he felt the power of "the Spirit of the Lord" again coming "upon him mightily," as at other times, and he put his arms about the two middle pillars, and he bowed himself with all his might, and the temple fell upon the lords and all the people, and Samson slew more Philistines at his death than in his lifetime. Thus died Samson.

Now, brethren, his strength was not in his hair. His unshorn locks were only the sign of his Nazarite relation unto God, and the power of the Lord was with him as long as he respected the secret that no razor was ever to come on his head. Yes, the record says, "Howbeit the hair of his head had begun to grow again after he was shaven." That is mentioned because the ignorant ascribed his strength to pull the temple down to this fact; but, Samson called on the *Lord God to strengthen him only this once more.*

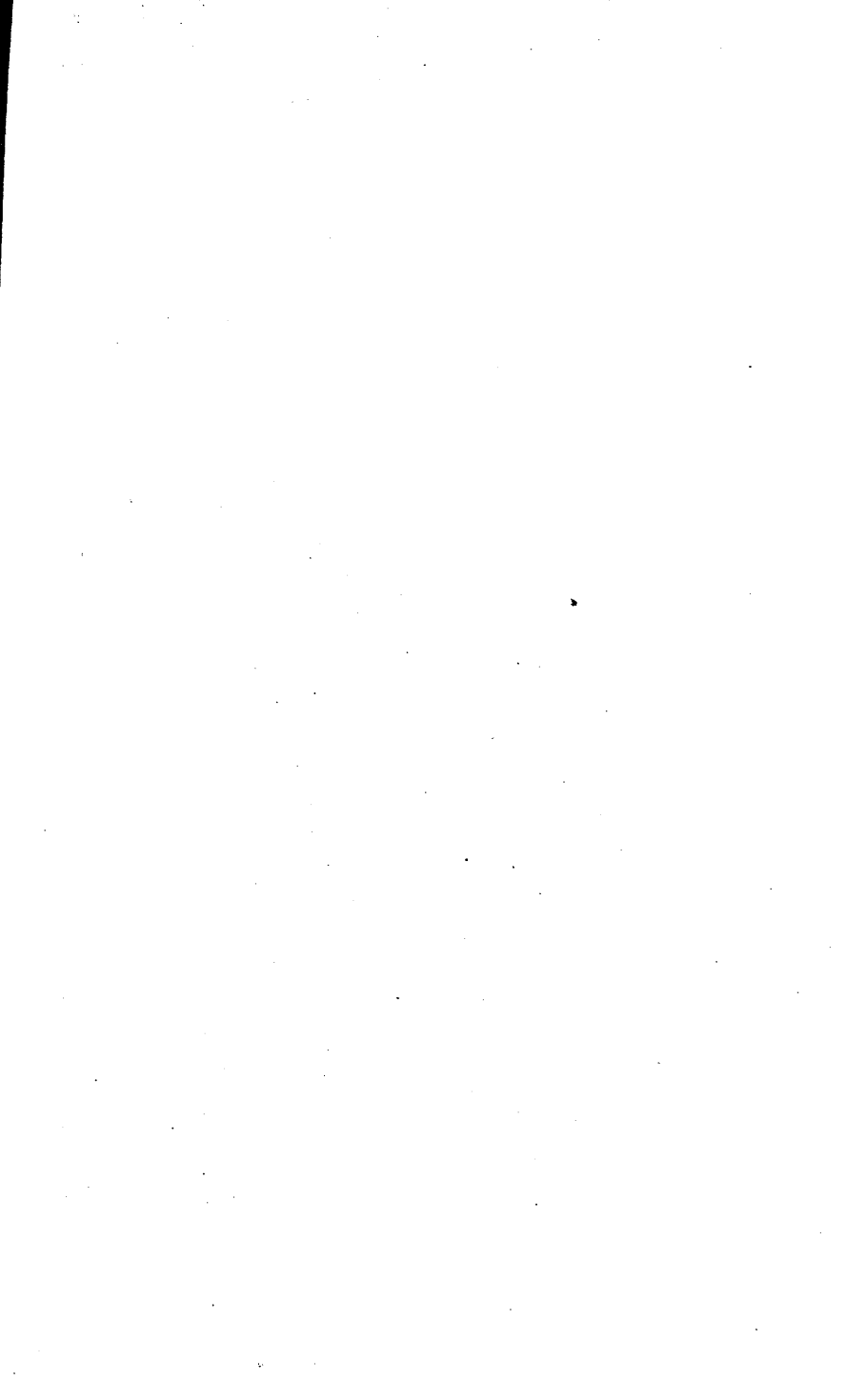
I will now briefly show you the full Deliverer in contrast with this partial deliverer. There never was a time when Manoah could look on Samson and say, "This is my son, in whom *I* am well pleased." But when Jesus came as "Son of Man"—heir of the undivided man—being male and female in himself, Delilah could not tempt nor overcome him, and God cried from the cloud, saying, "This is *my* Son, in whom *I* am well pleased." He was not only a Nazarite, but also a Sanctified Son—the God-Man. This is he who even went down into hell [the grave], and came out alive again "*according to his own word.*" *He* laid down his own life, and took it up again the third day, and ascended back into Heaven.

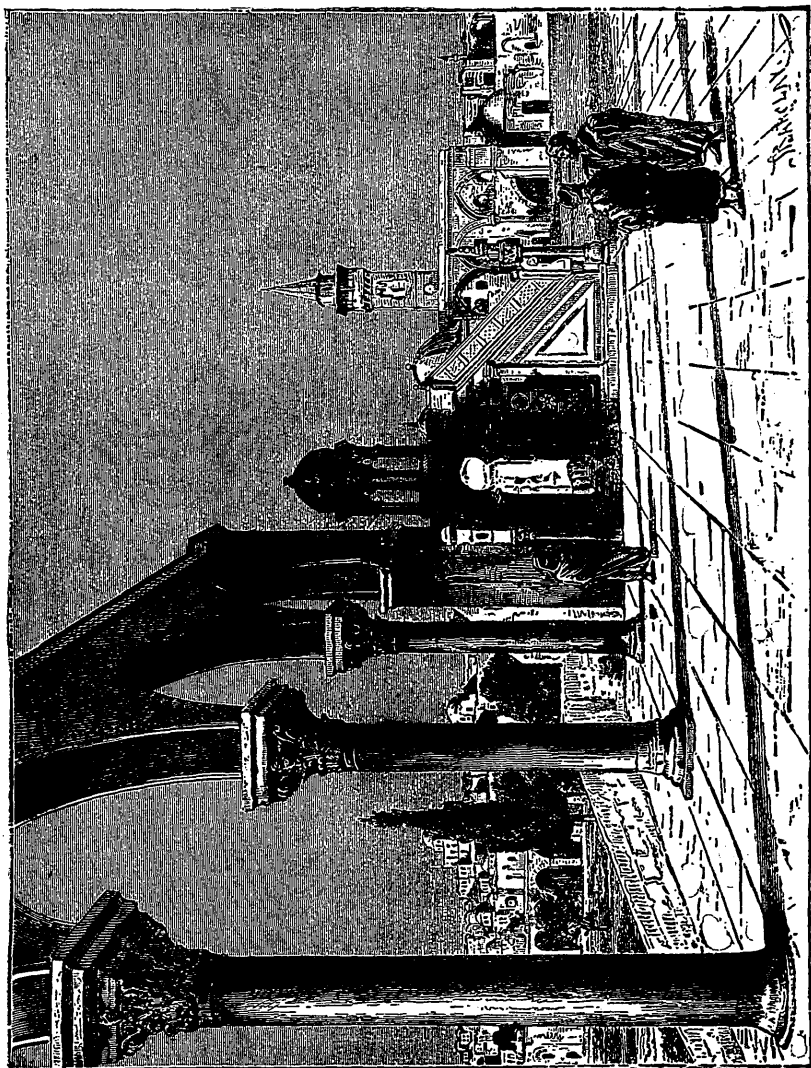
THE SENT SON.

“Dost thou believe on the Son of God?”—St. John IX., 35.

I want to direct your attention to one of those scenes in which the dear Lord reveals himself not only as the Wonder-worker, but also as the Servant of mankind. Read the ninth chapter of St. John, from the first to the thirty-eighth verse. In the thirty-fifth verse, this question is propounded: “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” This is the key-note to the wondrous life, and work, and words of the Lord Jesus Christ. He came into the world to convince the world who he is, the Prince of the skies in human disguise.

The Lord, himself, addressed these words to a certain man in Jerusalem, he of the wondrous eyes; to a man who had been born blind; a man who had never seen him until this moment of time; but, when he heard his voice, he knew him. O brethren, there are things that can be counterfeited; but there is a timbre in the sanctified human voice that never can be. When this man heard the voice that had said, “Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam,” he knew it was the same that said, “Dost thou believe on the Son of God?” And he had such confidence in that voice, that he was willing to accept any one whom Jesus should declare to be the Son of God. Hence, when the Lord said unto him, “Thou hast





PRESENT VIEW IN THE OLD TEMPLE GROUNDS.

both soon him, and it is he that talketh with thee," he said, "Lord, I believe," and he "worshipped him."

Now, dear friends, there are steps, stages, and degrees in grace, as in everything else. There is first the soil, then the sowing, and after a while, the reaping. This man's heart had to be prepared. The sowing had been done; and when Jesus met him on this occasion, he was ready to say, "Yes." The Lord never said to any one, "Follow me," until he was prepared; until the person addressed was ready to say, "Yes." Oh, how magnificent it is to be so that you never make a mistake about the heart! What a heroic thing it is to be the man who never asks a woman to marry him, but she says, "Yes." What a wondrous thing to be the Messiah, and say, "Will you have me?" And the soul be ready to say, "Yes."

This man had been a very unfortunate creature. He had been born blind. And in this, he is a type of the spiritual degradation of every sinner, until he has found out who Jesus is. Not only had he been born blind, but he had been taught that his parents had been guilty of some grievous sin, and that God had afflicted them and him on that account. Poor fellow, he believed that he had been born in greater sin than those who had eyes to see. Oh, what glad news it was one day, to hear one who spoke with authority, who spoke the words as though they were true; to hear him say, "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his

parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

Oh, blessed words ! how he wished he had eyes to see the man who could say these things unto him. Brethren, I want to tell you, to-night, something about this. This man is the only man in the world ever born blind, except as a consequence of sin. Some twenty-five years back of this event, a certain man and a certain woman married, and had this son born blind unto them, for the express purpose, that Jesus should meet him in the streets of Jerusalem and speak the word that should give sight unto him. Jesus and his apostles were passing along the pavements, and saw this man as he sat there with his hat in his hand to receive alms. He heard voices and steps coming toward him, and held out his hat, as his custom was ; but the disciples say, "Master, have you noticed this man?" They had seen him often. It was a common sight. This poor man could not help himself. There was no surgeon who could help him. Oh, what a type he now is of the sinner's condition ! Except he is born again, there is no help for him, no escape. No sinner in all the world can save himself. A man might as well try to lift himself over the Ohio river by the strap of his boots, as to try to lift himself out of the perishing nature in which he is born. Suppose you should attempt to keep the Mosaic law perfectly, as the pious young man did who came to Jesus and said unto him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may

inherit eternal life?" Jesus said, "Thou knowest the commandments." He answered, "Master, all these have I kept from my youth." Jesus replied, "One thing thou lackest; go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and come, take up thy cross and follow me."

Now, dear brethren, it does not mean, if he had sold all he had and given it unto the poor, that that would have secured him eternal life. The apostle Paul declares, "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing." It was not giving his goods to the poor that would have gained him "the Gift of God," which is "eternal life," but "following" Jesus Christ. He was on the *doing-plan*, and what the Lord told him first to do, was a love test. If he had met that test, he would have been saved, for then he would have followed Jesus.

What a relief it was for this poor blind beggar to be told that his parents had not sinned, and that he was no more a sinner than those who had not been born blind. What a friend he had found in Jesus! That's the way the dear Lord reaches the human heart. I never knew him to throw a sinner's sins in his face; but I have known him to denounce self-righteous hypocrites and professed religionists in the most bitter terms. To this poor man, whom everybody has considered a reprobate, he saith, "Neither this man nor his parents have sinned, but this blindness is upon him that the works of God

might be manifest in him." That's Jesus. I tell you we talk about the Lord a good deal, and often do not have much acquaintance with him. To understand his heart and mind when he speaks, and to have a knowledge of God, means vastly more than mere Bible learning. You might study the Scriptures until you had them at your finger ends, but that is not the "knowledge" required. That's the kind of knowledge we have of Alexander, of Cæsar, and of other great men ; but when you know *him*, that is when you know the Spirit and mind of Christ, you have found salvation indeed.

Now, when he had thus spoken he spat on the ground, and made clay, and rubbed it over his sightless eyeballs, and said unto him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." Siloam means ^{the} Sent. The Sent of God sent the blind man unto Sent. The blind man said, "All right ; I will go." And he arose and went his way forthwith. I'll tell you why he obeyed with such alacrity. Jesus had won his confidence, because he had said he was not a great sinner for being born blind, and neither was his father and mother cursed of God. Now he was a sinner, but being born blind did not make him a sinner. There was no curse of God on him. That is the burden Jesus has rolled away from his heart. Ah, there are very few men or women who *want* to be sinners, but there are millions and millions of sinners ; poor, suffering, perishing creatures, going on as fast as the wheels of time can carry them toward

everlasting destruction. They sin naturally, even as the sparks fly upward, or as water runs down the hill. It is this wretched condition of the lost and condemned man which so excited the pity and love of God, that he sent his only begotten Son into the world, that whosoever should believe on *him* should not perish, but should have eternal life through him.

So the blind man goes on his way full of joy. This is the only time of rejoicing he has ever had. Not a word has been said about what should come to pass when he got to the pool. But he is thinking only of the compassionate voice which is still ringing in his ears. "*He* told me to wash in the pool, and I am bound to do it," said he to himself; "I do not know what is to happen, but I feel as if some mighty power is upon me." And, lo! just then he reached the pool, stooped down, and washed the clay off, and came away seeing! Oh, how he rejoiced as he passed back along the streets, and what sights greeted his enraptured vision! He made a great noise as he went shouting, and gazing in wonder. Soon a great crowd gathered about him. It was just about the time the people were coming out of the temple and the synagogues. It was quite a time before any one could make out what was the matter with him. At length some said, "Why, this is the man who was born blind." Others said, "It *is* like him, but he cannot be that man." Then he cried out and said, "*I am* he." They

all said, "Tell us how this thing happened unto thee." And he told them. Now, brethren, a blind man knows when he sees, and a man who has been born again by the operation of the Holy Spirit on his spirit knows that he has eyes to read a title to a mansion in the skies. It does not require that one shall arise from the dead to tell him that.

Some of the multitude wanted to know who had done this strange thing, and he told them that he didn't know, but that he had heard him called "Jesus." They said: "This is a strange story you are telling, and you are acting very improperly on the Sabbath day, and we will take you in charge." And they arrested him on the Sabbath day, and the next day he had a legal examination before judges of the Sanhedrin court. He told the whole transaction over and over again, in answer to various cross-questions, in which they sought to entangle him, and make his testimony appear unreliable. Finally, he told them that he would not go over it any more. Then the Pharisees said, "Where is he?" He said, "I know not." Then they said, "This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath day." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such a miracle?" This was among the judges of the court, and there arose a wrangle and a division among them, but they concluded to ask him "that aforetime was blind," and so they said unto him, "What sayest thou of him

that he hath opened thine eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

But they would not believe him that he had been born blind, and they called his parents, and unto his father they said, "Is this man your son who says he was born blind?" He said, "I know he is our son, and that he was born blind, but by what means he now sees I know not, or who hath opened his eyes; he is of age, ask him; behold, he shall speak for himself." This witness proved the wrong thing for them, but they were in for it now, and so the mother was called, and gave identically the same testimony. Nothing could shake their joint testimony. So by *three* witnesses they judicially established the fact of the miracle. Under their own law it only required two agreeing witnesses to establish any fact beyond all contradiction. The court which investigated this matter was the most learned and dignified court on the face of the earth.

The parents threw the burden of telling *how* and *who* opened their son's eyes on him, first, because he knew; secondly, because they were afraid of the Jewish rulers, for it had already been decreed that if any member of the Jewish church should acknowledge Jesus to be the Christ, he or she should be excommunicated. So they very adroitly escaped committing themselves by saying, "He is of age, ask him; he shall speak for himself." The judges and rulers were now furious with themselves for having begun the inquiry which had indisputably

established the fact of the miracle. By the shrewdness of the parents they were thrown back again to the son. They recalled him, and said unto him, officially, "Give God the praise ; we know that this man [Jesus] is a sinner." This is a court decision, and a command to repudiate the Wonder-worker ; but he boldly answered, "Whether he be a sinner or not, one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." Then they said again, "What did he do to thee? How opened he thine eyes?" He answered, "I have told you, and ye did not hear it ; wherefore would ye hear or believe it again? Will ye also be his disciples?" This made them still more furious, and they "reviled him," and said unto him, "*Thou* art his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses, but as for this fellow, we know not whence he is." The man answered, "It is marvellous that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes! Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one born blind? If this man were not of God he could do nothing." They could make no answer, and so they "cast him out"; excommunicated him from the Jewish church.

These pious rulers pretended that it was an awful thing for the Lord of the Sabbath to heal a blind man on that day. This is the sole charge they advanced against him. But the man still had his eyes to see, even if he was an outcast from his father's and

mother's church. There was a time when that would have grieved him almost to death, but now he has eyes to see, and he is a disciple of Jesus. Moses is dethroned, and he does not care for the excommunication, but goes out daily looking for the Wonder-worker, whom he has so bravely defended before the Sanhedrin. He longs to see *him*. In his heart he knows and adores him. He searched in the temple, everywhere for him. He may have seen him and passed him by, for he could not know him except by his voice. I now call your especial attention to the fact that the man with the marvellous eyes does not find the Lord, but that the Lord came out, and *found him*. Jesus knew all things; he knew how the people had treated him; how the rulers had reviled and then excommunicated him; how he had gloriously avowed himself to be his disciple. The Lord knew that this enmity and persecution was intended for himself, and that these same pious Pharisees, scribes and rulers would keep on until they should have impaled him on the Roman cross, and fully established the fact that he is indeed the Son of God. Is it not marvellous that everything his enemies did was overruled so as to make it links in the chain of evidence which establishes his Messiahship?

Suppose some man should arise who should contradict that there ever had been such a man as General George Washington, denying that he had ever been commander-in-chief of the armies of the

United Colonies, or President of the United States? We should try him for lunacy and send him to an insane asylum. Now, the men who undertake to contradict the fact that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, when they come to make an honest and serious investigation, will find the fact a thousand times better established than the fact Washington was President of the United States. It would take more volumes than any of us would care to read to exhaust the fact and argument of the life, transactions and miracles of Christ during his ministerial work on earth. St. John says: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name." And again he says: "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."

So the Jews, in their envy, established judicially the fact that this man had been born blind, and that Jesus had given him eyesight. Now, the power was not in the spittle and clay, nor in the washing; in none of these things, nor in all of them. They were all faith-tests, just like other things are commanded for love-tests, or tests of obedience.. This man was healed by the *word* of Christ; by *his will*. He *willed* him to have eyesight. The man's faith

was not strong. That's the reason the Lord used *means*. There are persons who at certain stages must have props to lean on. He might have said unto him, "Receive thy sight," but he did not say it. He was not prepared to hear it. On one occasion a blind beggar, Bartimeus, cried out in a great crowd, "Thou son of David, have mercy on me; have mercy on me," and Jesus stood still, and said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" And he said, "Lord, that I might receive my sight." Jesus promptly said, "Receive thy sight; thy FAITH hath saved thee." Instantly the man had eyes to see. No spittle, no clay, no water here, because this man had already found out *who* Jesus is. He called him "Son of David"—the Messiah. But here is a man who does not yet know who he is; so here is spittle, clay and Siloam.

Now, brethren, Jesus sought this man after he was cast out. The reason is the man had never seen, and did not yet know him. Oh, the glorious eyes he had! I have often thought I would like to have seen the eyes the Lord gave this man. But he could not tell Jesus when he saw him. He began almost to think his eyes were not worth so much after all, and a spirit of discouragement was creeping over him, when some one laid his hand on him gently and touched his shoulder, and said, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Oh, that voice thrilled him through and through, for it was the voice that had said, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." He

turned his eyes upon him in a rapture of delight, and said, as soon as he could get his breath, "Master, who is he, that I might believe on him?" And Jesus said, "Thou seest me, and I am he." The man was at his feet in an instant of time, and worshipped him there. He cried, "Lord, I believe." And he worshipped him. So, brethren, this is the climax. This is the key-note of it all: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" To say, "Lord, I believe that *thou* art the Christ," is salvation from the wrath that is in the world, and eternal life created in the mortal spirit.

Brethren, I never ask the sinner to confess his sins, nor to confess some creed. I never ask him if he believes the story of Jonah and the whale. It is true, and I believe it; but it is not essential unto salvation. If the sinner confesses Christ before men, the living-water begins to well up *in* him, unto eternal life. His spirit-thirst is quenched, when he can truly say, "Lord, I believe." Worship ensues spontaneously. "And he worshipped him." The Lord did not tell him to do that. He did it as he looked upon him, because he had eyes to see. Now he had spiritual sight. His answer to the question, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" gave him life eternal and spiritual understanding. This is the single issue. Jesus says, "I am the Son of God; do you believe *me*?" And the man said, "Yes, I do. *You* say so, and I believe it." It does not now take anything to convince him, but for Jesus to say

so. By his word he had given him eyes to see him, and by his word he believes him when he says, "I am he." The outward demonstrations were signs to convince him and all the world, who Jesus is.

O brethren, how condescending it is, that the Prince of Glory should come and serve as a Servant, to the physical infirmity of this man, just to *enable* him to say unto him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" and get "yes" for the true answer. Then, too, he told him the secret of Heaven. He could not know who he is until Jesus said unto him, "I am he, and thou dost see me." Above all, I want you to observe the compassion of the Lord, and his lowly stooping to the use of spittle and clay, and washing in Siloam. All this service, to the lowliest man in Jerusalem, precedes the exercise of Divine power, which takes place in his absence; first, to give physical sight to the born blind, and then, later on, to give spiritual life and sight to pierce his disguise. He is Servant; then King; then Saviour. See, how the Lord stoops to show himself unto us all. Oh, may you all have eyes to see these things and the Heavenly King! Amen.

THE WONDER-WORKER.

"Of a truth thou art the Son of God."—Matt. XIV., 33.

This is the fundamental consideration to be impressed on the hearts of men in every age of the world. It is the only truth, the believing of which is "unto salvation." Yet many are believing any, and everything else, and are perishing in their sins. But to find this out, and to confess it, brings salvation, redemption. "Of a truth thou art the Son of God." This was the unanimous conclusion and declaration of a ship-load of men on the sea of Galilee.

Jesus Christ came into the world, in the fullness of time, to reveal in person the mercy of God, that, through him, man might rise out of self, and become a child of the Heavenly Father. As every generation needs must go to school to learn its a b c's, so must every generation be taught the fundamental truth, that Jesus *is* the Son of God. In this last age of the world, we make a mistake in thinking that nearly everybody believes that Jesus is the Christ. It is an absurdity for any man to profess that he believes Jesus is the Son of God, and remain in his sins. He may do that and give an intellectual assent; but that is not the faith which receives Christ as Lord.

I want to consider with you, to-night, the surrounding circumstances and events which brought a



THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.



ship-load of men to make this declaration at the feet of Jesus. Just before this, news came to Jesus of the death of John the Baptist. He had been beheaded by King Herod for telling him the truth. The easiest way to offend a guilty man is to tell him the truth. John's disciples took his headless body and buried it, "and came and told Jesus." What a blessed thing it is to have a true friend in Jesus, to whom we can come and tell all our trials and sorrows! Sometimes I hear it said: "There is no place like home." I know a better place than home. There is no place like being with Jesus. When I sit alone with him, or walk and talk with him, and he with me, brethren, there is no place like that to me.

The death of John in that cruel and barbarous manner cast a gloom over all the disciples. Jesus saw the sad effect it had upon them, that John, the glorious forerunner of the Lord himself, that he who had attracted such multitudes, should thus be put to death. To Jesus, it must have been a foreshadow of his own suffering and tragic death. What an effect, at first, it must have had upon him! Yet, he must keep it concealed. It would never do to let his disciples, and John's, see that he too was cast down. So he cheered and comforted them with words of Heavenly grace, and he had them take a ship very early the next morning; and they sailed away from Capernaum out to a quiet place on a mountain near the sea. There they are to be all alone with him, for a day's rest and reflection.

For a number of days they had been so pressed with the multitude, bringing the sick and afflicted unto Jesus, that they had not so much as time to rest or eat. Doubtless the Lord based his reason for this excursion on the fact that they all needed rest, and not on the fact that the death of John was weighing heavily on their hearts. They tried to keep it a secret, and to get off without any noise early in the morning; but after all the caution that could be taken, their departure was observed by a few, and Jesus was seen to go aboard the vessel. Soon the news spread and the eager ones took in the course of the ship as it sailed leisurely out over the sea, in a northerly direction. Some time before noon they landed at the point of their destination; and oh, as they ascended the mountain side, what a sight they saw! Looking down into the plain and along the sea-coast, they saw a struggling mass of humanity coming on from the city and the villages; some were racing afoot, and some were sailing in boats. And lo, when Jesus sat down on the mountain side, the people began to gather about him. He compared the racing mass to a herd of sheep without a shepherd, and he was moved with great compassion toward them. For the disciples, all the pleasant prospects of the excursion were destroyed.

But the Lord had compassion on the multitude, and began at once "to teach them many things, and to heal all their sick." Oh, what a preacher was he! If I could do that; if I could by a word or touch heal

the sick and the afflicted, how the people would flock here. You know how people will come for bodily healing ; how much we care for these sick bodies of ours, and how little we think about the spiritual. So he "taught them many things." That was what they most needed. So rapt was he that he took no note of the flight of time. The sun was sinking behind the hills.

In the meanwhile, the disciples were greatly disappointed. They were disgruntled. They lost their tempers. They allowed that *they* were entitled to *some* attention as well as the multitude. Thus we see how selfish we are. We do not stop to think how awful human nature is. Yet Jesus was "offered for our offenses [sins], and raised from the dead for our justification." Not until we shall have been a million years in his everlasting kingdom, will we have arrived at a point from which we shall be able to look back, and see out of what we have been brought. Brethren, what songs of praise will ever spring from our lips, when the full love and power of our glorious King dawns upon us.

Well, I am sorry the disciples were disappointed that day. By and by, when they could stand it no longer, they came to Jesus, and said, "Master, don't you see that the sun is low, and these people have been here all day? Won't you send them away that they may go down into the villages and buy something to eat?" Well, that sounds like a sensible suggestion ; and so it is, from the earthly standpoint.

But Jesus looked at it from the Heavenly, and so he said unto them, "Feed ye them. Why do you propose to send them away?" That question comes home to us here to-night. "Feed ye them." Well, they said, "Master, two hundred penny-worth of bread would not be near enough to feed this multitude, that each might have a little." He said, "What do you have?" After a little investigation, they reported that there was a lad who had five barley loaves and two small fishes. He said, "Bring them unto me."

Brother, sister, whatever you may have, bring it unto Jesus. Do not dare to hold on to anything you have. Oh, the men and women who are struggling to save themselves! How can they expect the Saviour to lead them; for they won't *be* led. Well, the disciples bought the five loaves and the two fishes. The lad got his money, and he was glad. They brought them to Jesus; and he commanded the people to sit down on the green grass, in companies of fifty and one hundred. He didn't command them to sit down in the mud, but to sit on the *green* grass—God's grass; not on the devil's withered grass. And they sat down in companies. This was a military division, and they understood it. And there were about five thousand men, besides some women and children. Behold them all sitting there on the grass; company by company; row upon row! The expectation is very great. And Jesus took one of the loaves—he had them all before him.

The apostles are standing on his right and left, and the other disciples in a semicircle just back of him. Can you not see the picture?

He took the bread, and raising his eyes toward Heaven, he said, "O my Father, bless and multiply this bread." And he brake the loaf, and lo, each particle was as large as the original loaf had been ! So he took another, and another, until all had been broken, and it continued to multiply itself. It is the symbol of his own body, yet to be broken as the bread of life, unto all believers. That is what he is representing before them, but no one could perceive it. Doubtless, the death of John is in his mind and suggests the prefiguring of his own "decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem," not by the will of man solely, but by the will of God the Father.

As he brake the loaves and the fishes he gave it unto the apostles, and they gave it unto the multitude, thus signifying what afterwards came to pass on Pentecost, when by the inspiring power of the Holy Spirit they proclaimed his gospel unto all the world, and established and organized and recruited the visible Church. In their hands the bread continued to multiply ; and thus he is giving the bread of life unto a perishing world through you and through me, for we have "the Heavenly treasure in the earthen vessel."

The Scriptures say that the people were hungry, and that they all ate and were all filled. You know what an effect it would have on the appetite to race

five or six or seven or eight miles, and be on some mountain, breathing the sharp, pure air five or six hours. You would be very hungry, and it would require a double portion to satisfy you. Well, this multitude was all "filled." Oh, this is the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ! It fills, and it fills now. It is not a bite apiece, but there is plenty for all, and to spare. Every soul who obeyed the command to sit down on the green grass was filled; every obedient soul had all he or she could contain. And never was there bread like that before; and oh, to see how it multiplied! How the wonder grew! How they talked and ate, and ate and talked! The apostles served them; the other disciples looked on, and waited in mute astonishment. It seemed to them that the multitude would never be satisfied. Not one of those who came with the Lord had had a bite yet, and it looked as though they never would, and they began to feel slighted. They think they are going to be left again.

But at length Jesus said, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Ah, you never saw such an economist as Jesus is! And lo, and behold, there were twelve basketsful of fragments—just as many as there were sons of Jacob and tribes of Israel, just as many as he had apostles. Twelve for one; a basketful to each apostle. Their gloomy forebodings were scattered; twelve is God's fundamental number in the New Jerusalem of the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

After this, what do you think Jesus did? He told the apostles and those who came with them to take the twelve baskets of fragments and go aboard the ship, and sail over to Capernaum. They did not want to do it; they did not like the idea of leaving him there in that lonely mountain place; but he "constrained them" to go; that is, he commanded them to go, saying, "I will remain here, and dismiss and send the multitude away." And so they went their way sorrowful. They could see that he was not well pleased with them. They *felt* it more than they apprehended it, for he had not said a word. They went off sore at heart.

After they had departed, he arose and dismissed the multitude; but the men gathered around him in the most tumultuous and enthusiastic manner, shouting and declaring that he should be Israel's king, and vowing that they would follow him, though they had to wade in blood, anywhere he should choose to lead them. They said, "We are willing to die for you, and you shall redeem Israel from the Roman yoke." He had to tear himself away from them, and disappeared mysteriously; they never could tell how.

He went high up on the mountain, and there, all alone, at midnight, engaged in prayer. There the Son of God wrestled for me. He prayed that he might have all wisdom to know what to do and what *not* to do; that he might put forth the power his Father would have him manifest, and no more.

Oh, it is so hard to have all power and yet not use it, except in a very limited way !

Well, the disciples went aboard the ship very reluctantly, and sailed slowly out on the sea, expecting every moment the Master would make his appearance and hail them ; but twilight deepened, and night drew on, and he came not into sight. They could not understand it. About midnight they gave up watching and loitering for him, and concluded to make sail for Capernaum. But it was not long before they were involved in deeper trouble.

Ah, brethren, we never think or do wrong, but that we get into trouble, unless it is quickly repented of and forgiven. Be ye careful not "to give place to the devil." He'll come in if he sees the slightest opening. The more you have been delivered, the sooner trouble will overtake you if you neglect the Master, or go out of his Spirit. The Lord excuses the infant or the poorly informed disciple and shields him, no matter what his default ; but the well instructed and abundantly blessed Christian is held responsible for *his* conduct. Be ye careful not to be "deceived by the deceitfulness of sin." "Put the whole armor of God on," and keep it on.

They had not gone far out until they were in *outward* trouble. The *inward* trouble had been with them ever since they soured, because they saw the multitude spoil their day alone with him. They did not *follow him* ; but threw themselves back into the house Self, built on the sand. At first all sails

were furled, and they rowed listlessly or drifted along ; but there seemed to be an undertow, and they made no headway. The devil soon sent a wind to vex them, and "it was contrary to them." When they got ready to go forward, and all sails were spread, they could make no progress at all. This vexed them more and more.

What a practical lesson this is ! I have never done wrong in thought or deed, but that something of this kind overtook me. We cannot always account for things that come upon us ; but it is always traceable to the cause I have named. "Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me." They did not believe in him on the mountain that day or they would have had compassion on the multitude, and would have cheerfully made the sacrifice he did, and given all the assistance in their power. But they were in a temper that unfitted them to be with him any longer, and so he sent them away.

Oh, how alone is "the man of sorrows" ! Indeed, he is "acquainted with grief." To put forth the magnificence of divine compassion, and shadow before them all his broken body, and not a soul could see it. Do you wonder he disappeared mysteriously, and prayed alone on the mountain top ? For a little rest and comforting, he must needs be alone with his Father, and as near the throne as the mountain could lift his weary body. There, for a few hours, he could close his eyes to the sight, and his

ears to the din of sin. The mad rush of the five thousand men, inspired by Satan, to make him an earthly king, to rule over sinners, tended seriously to compromise and frustrate the "fullness of time" for the accomplishment of his decease at Jerusalem.

But an hour or two with the Father, there in the pure and serene mountain air, and all was composure again. The Saviour of sinners came grandly down and walked out on the sea, signifying that all human passions were put under his feet. This was in the fourth watch of the night, between three and five o'clock in the morning, and not long before the dawning of a new day. The sea was troubled, and tossed like the hearts of the men on the storm-driven ship. They were doing their level best to maintain their course, and to escape being dashed on the rock-bound coast to the east, when lo, they saw a wondrous sight. It stalked so majestically along on the surface of the sea, and looked so unearthly and spectral, that they were filled with fear. That's the "wrath of this world" within them—the devil's own. Never was any man afraid, but it was the devil in him. So the outward storm in nature strikes a corresponding chord in their hearts.

But there are greater alarms than the storms of nature. The spectral object they saw was walking on the sea, as if it had been solid land. Where it trod, perfect calm prevailed, and the sea was as smooth as glass. It had the form and general appearance of a man wrapped in a mantle; but

how could it be a man walking on the sea ! And then it loomed up in gigantic size. Oh, how their hearts thumped within them, as they clung to the sides of the vessel and peered out through the storm and dark ! So moved were they, that they cried out in great affright, "It's a spirit ! It's a spirit ! It's a ghost ! God save us !" Then there came a voice over the water, and it was a voice with which they were familiar, saying, "Be of good cheer ; be not afraid ; it is I."

This greatly calmed their fears, but increased their awe beyond all bounds. They were not yet, however, fully satisfied. The voice was the Master's, no doubt of that ; but how *can* it be *him* ! Peter was more daring than any of the rest, and to show it, he cried out, "Master, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." A voice reached them faintly, saying, "Come." Yes, it *is* the same sound again, and truly the Master's voice. Peter is in for it. He cannot now back out. He will not manifest cowardice before them all. Some said, "Don't go ; we are pretty sure it is the Master ; but it may be some evil spirit has assumed his voice to lure us on to destruction." The spectral figure wrapped in a long mantle seemed to be coming nearer and nearer ; but the wind and the sea raged so around the ship, that it was driven in an opposite direction. Yet wherever Jesus trod all was perfect peace. Ah, the peace of God "casteth out all fear." Peter is now ready, and clambers down the side of the vessel, and

"walks out on the water to go to Jesus." He had gone but a little way, when the devil threw the water boisterously up into his face; he took his eyes off Jesus to look at the danger, and "began to sink," but instantly he cried, "Lord, save me!" That's all he said. It is the shortest prayer on record. He didn't have time to utter another word. Praise the Lord, it was enough. I tell you that the prayers which reach Heaven are short ones. Immediately, forthwith, Jesus was by his side and stretched forth his hand and caught him, and said unto him, "Wherefore didst thou *doubt*, O thou of little faith?"

I want to show you more particularly still, why they had to struggle and suffer so. I have shown you one reason; but back of that lies another. There is generally a wheel within a wheel. You remember how Peter called unto Jesus? He said a very wrong thing. This is what he said: "Lord, if it be thou." That's what made the mischief possible. That gave "place to the devil." Brethren, never say "if" unto the Lord, or about his word. The devil will floor you if you do, and make you suffer. So many say, "I trust I am saved;" "I hope I am saved." If a man is married, don't he know it? If he has an overcoat on, don't he know it? Had Peter left out that "if," and simply said, "Lord, bid me come on the water unto thee," all the devils in or out of hell could not have troubled him. I never again want to give my Lord grief, and have him say

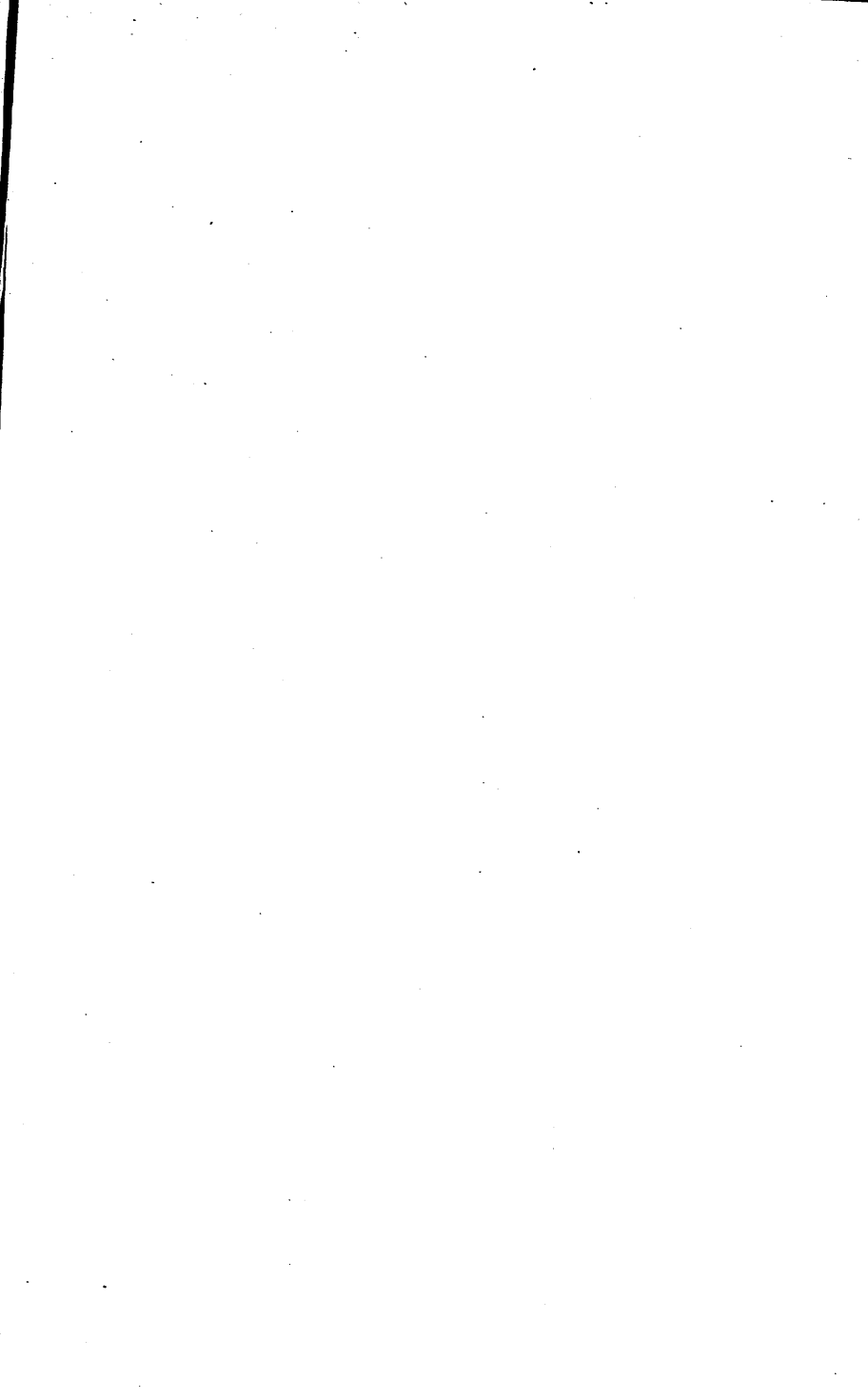
unto me, "Wherefore didst thou *doubt*, O thou of little faith?"

And now the Lord and Peter have come aboard the vessel. No sooner had Jesus entered into it, than the wind ceased to rage, and the sea was at rest. It came to pass so instantaneously that they were all filled with wonder and delight. The storm without in nature had ceased, and the storm of fear and unbelief within their breasts subsided. The outward storm passed away because of his presence, and their renewed and greatly strengthened faith in him brought divine peace and Heavenly joy. Then it was, moved by a single impulse and irresistible conviction, they all fell at his feet and worshipped him, saying, "Of a truth thou art the Son of God!" This is the discovery and confession that brings salvation. I'll never ask any man, woman or child to confess anything else unto salvation.

Now, dear friends, I have told you this story of stories, that you may see how completely and triumphantly this chain of marvellous events demonstrates Jesus of Nazareth to be "of a truth the Son of God," though born in the likeness of men. These transactions came to pass to establish his claim, and to make the Truth known. He was just as truly the Son of God before he wrought these miracles, and before these men believed and confessed the Truth, but these works were done and handed down, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and that believing, ye might have life eternal through him.

The discouragement over the death of John and the distemper they were in over the miscarriage of the excursion for a day alone with him, made them very unimpressible ; but the miracle of walking on the sea, and calming the storm and sea wherever he trod, removed the last lingering scepticism about his real character. Their hearts were so "hardened," that they did not appreciate the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

Now, these and other miracles were given in divine power, by the word or will of Christ. They do not *make* him Son of God, but they demonstrate the *fact* unto all the world. These apostles and disciples knew him before as a mighty prophet ; but now they know him in his higher and truer nature and divine relationship. He is now fully revealed unto them. May you all be able to confess him every day, and every hour, to be "of a truth the Son of God." Amen.





ANCIENT THRESHING FLOOR.

GIDEON THE BREAKER.

PART FIRST.

“Thou mighty man of valor, the Lord is with thee.”—Judges VI.

The Israelites did evil in the sight of the Lord ; just like the Americans, the Germans, the French and the English are doing evil now-a-days. It is all done in the sight of the Lord. No evil can be hid. The consequence of evil-doing is always moral, physical and spiritual degradation, and final ruin. It is impossible to dwell in evil thoughts without doing evil acts. The thought always lies back of the deed. The thinker as well as the doer of evil, must suffer for it. While the Israelites dwelt in evil, the Midianites and the Amalekites could easily prevail over them, and come in and eat up their substance. Every year, for seven years, these foreigners had come in on them in numbers like unto swarms of grasshoppers.

The same thing happens to-day. If you do evil, the enemy will afflict you, and capture you if you continue in evil. These *ites* denote the foes of your soul. If they are not expelled they will drag you through poverty and misery down into hell. It takes days and years sometimes to effect the ruin ; but it is inevitable, if you do not return and call upon the Lord mightily. We may just as well begin to see

this now. Do not wait until you are a wreck, and seven years gone in poverty of soul and bondage unto sin. We only think right when we think what the Lord thinks. All other thoughts are foolish and wicked.

So, when Israel found there was no possible way of escape, they "cried unto the Lord." Well, I have done that ; I have gone wrong, and then when it got too hard for me, I cried unto the Lord. But alas, how independent we are when everything is prosperous, or goes right with us as we think. And yet when things go right we should continually say, "Praise the Lord," and not simply run unto him when in danger, or sorrow, or pain, or death. The practice of praising the Lord will become as natural as breathing the air if it is kept up continually, and far more pleasant and invigorating. O brethren, nothing hurts those who are thus trusting the Lord. I know what I am talking about. I have had an experience. I have been kept as Daniel in the lion's den. Some of you were witnesses.

Now, dear friends, whenever Israel got thoroughly ready, the Lord was ready, and had been all the time, to deliver them. Israel means the Church, and means you and me and every one who has confessed Christ and been born again. As soon as Israel was ready, the Lord sent a prophet, and he reminded them of what the Lord had done for them ; how *he* had brought them out of Egypt, that is, the sinner's land ; out of the house of bondage, that is, Satan's

service; into a land flowing with milk and honey, and abundant in corn and wine,—these denote rich blessings in Christ Jesus; and how *he* had driven out the Amorites, and given them full and free possession. “And now,” said he, “all this invasion and oppression is upon you because of your licentiousness and idol worship; whenever you get right at heart, and come back unto the Lord, *he* will drive out the Midianites and the Amalekites.”

You see the devil wants men to believe when they go wrong, that the Lord has left them. He makes our poor hearts to ache, and our silly heads to think that the Lord has clean gone back on us, because we have gone back on him. That is the commonest form of delusion in the world. The devil laughs every time he makes any one to feel or think that.

So this man Gideon—that’s the name the Lord gave him; his own name is not mentioned—has had lately, much reflection over what the prophet said, and in a feeble and wistful way his heart is beginning to turn toward the Lord. He was up there on the side of the mountain, behind a wine-press, threshing barley, hiding the best he could from the Midianites, who have been seizing everything they could lay their hands on. There they are, down in the fertile valley of Jezreel, one hundred and thirty-five thousand armed soldiers, and half a million camp followers, with their cattle, scattered all over the land.

Gideon and his servants are threshing as quietly as possible, and Gideon is on the outlook to prevent any

surprise, when lo, a lordly-looking Stranger appeared before him suddenly. He could not tell from whence he came, or how he got there unobserved ; but there he was in his princely bearing, unattended, sitting on the rock under the oak. And he looked kindly and benignantly upon Gideon, and said unto him, "Thou mighty man of valor, the Lord is with thee."

First, the sudden appearance, and now this extraordinary speech, made Gideon quake all over. He scarcely had any wit to speak. He thought there must be some great mistake here. He knew he was a man of no valor at all ; and to call him "a mighty man of valor," seemed almost like mockery. Yet he felt constrained to treat the Stranger very deferentially, and so he addressed him as "my lord," because he takes him to be a prince—just as a peer of England is "my lord." Who the Stranger is, or wherefore he has come, he has not the slightest idea ; but the longer he stands in his presence the more profoundly is he impressed with the idea that he is face to face with some mighty one. He waives the suggestion that he is himself a mighty man of valor, and begins to argue against the last part of the Stranger's affirmation, "the Lord is with thee." Even the personal side of this he ignores, and says, "If the Lord is with *us* ; if he has not gone back on us, why then, has all this befallen us ; where be all his miracles ? Did he not bring us from Egypt ? But now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hand of the Midianites."

At the end of this long speech, the Stranger "looked upon him." But Gideon never forgot that "look." You know what power there is sometimes in a look. There was so much of pity and compassion, that Gideon felt as if he could have crawled into an auger hole. After the look the princely One said authoritatively, "Go, in this *thy* might, and *thou shalt* deliver Israel from the hand of the Midianites ; have *I* not sent thee ? "

This puzzled Gideon very greatly, and he began to feel strange sensations creeping over him. He almost doubted who he was or where he was. But being obliged to make some sort of response, he said, "Oh, sir, wherewith shall *I* save Israel? Behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." The Stranger said, "Surely, *I* will be with thee, and *thou* shalt smite the Midianites as one man." *

For some little while Gideon had begun to suspect that his visitor was no earthly prince, and this last speech confirmed this view ; and so now in great awe, he replies, "If now I have found grace in thy sight, show me a sign that *thou* talkest with me." This shows that he now almost perceives who his guest is ; but the thought is too great for him, and he asks for a miracle to convince and confirm him. So he implored him and said, "Depart not thence, I pray thee, and I will bring forth my offering, and set it before thee." And he said, "I will tarry."

Gideon made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes, and a pot of broth, and brought them unto him under the oak, and the Stranger said, "Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them on the rock, and pour out the broth." Now, when he had done this, the Stranger "put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the offering, and there arose up fire out of the rock and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes," and the Stranger departed out of his sight.

It was not until now that Gideon fully realized he had been all the time talking unto "the angel of the Lord"; that is, unto the Lord himself. Oh, how he trembles now, as he remembers how he contradicted him and talked accusingly unto him to his face. Poor ignorant man, he did not know what he was doing! He was like the men in Jerusalem, who buffeted the Lord, and then mocked and scoffed as they crucified him. Do you not remember how he cried from the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"?

Brethren, do you have eyes to see the Lord? As for myself, I trust my heart will never again be in such spiritual blindness, which is the darkness of sin, that I would not know the Lord, if he should call or come unto me. Here is a glorious being who stands before and looks upon Gideon, and says unto him, "Thou mighty man of valor, the Lord *is* with thee." Here he tells Gideon the great secret of who he is, and yet he sees not and understands not.

O my friends, how awful is the blindness of sin ! Instead of falling on his face before him in adoring worship, Gideon contradicts him to his face, saying, "I am no man of valor at all, and, as for the Lord being with us, on the contrary, he hath forsaken us, and delivered us over to the power of the Midianites." Was there ever such mendacity and blindness? Oh, yes, it as common as dirt in the world to-day. It stalks up and down in every town and in nearly every family in the land.

How plainly the Lord told Gideon ! He said, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." Could any announcement be more plain ? And yet I tell you that not one Bible reader in a hundred thousand, nor yet one preacher in a thousand, has had eyes to see what I now make so plain to you, that a wayfaring man can see it. It is only recently the Lord hath opened mine eyes to see it. Praise his name forever ! Ah, as the light comes in, we realize what we do *not* know is a million-fold beyond what we *do* know.

"Lo, *I* am with you, Gideon, and *I* name you my mighty man of valor." Look here ! that is spoken to every Christian. Be careful to take heed. Harken, to understand, to worship, to serve and to adore him evermore. What my Lord calls me, that I am. He call me saint, and I am. He calls me son, and I am ; not Son of God *to be* in some far-off clime beyond the resurrection from the tomb, but Son of God *now*. It doth not yet appear what I

shall be; but when I shall see him, I shall be like him. This is the common portion of every saint. And he that hath this thought in him is purified by the thought; that is, over the faith *in* the thought, comes the purifying power of the Holy Spirit shedding the love of God abroad in the heart.

It does not do to think that the Lord is always a billion miles away. There he was that day under the oak, sitting on the rock, saying unto Gideon, "The Lord is with thee." It sounded to Gideon like an oft-told dream of some enchanted land, and glory far away, and only meant "with thee" in a very nebulous sort of way, just as you have been thinking about it. Look out, saint and sinner, the Lord is near enough unto you to know your thoughts, and see all you do! Do not be fooled into any other idea about it.

Truly, before the Lord named him Gideon, this son of Joash was a poor, weak, cowardly creature; the runt of the family of the Abiezrites. He was so cowardly, that he did not dare to thresh in sight of the Midianites. And yet the Lord named this man, and called him "mighty in valor." His weakness is one of the chief reasons for selecting him. He had never dreamed of being a mighty deliverer. He had no idea of leadership. Gideon means One Who Breaks. He never had broken nor torn anything down, but he will yet astonish the world.

The Lord seeing he was not yet understood spoke no more in the third person, but said unto him,

"Surely, *I* will be with thee, and *thou* shalt smite the Midianites as one man." That means business ; it means bloody war, and not a billion miles off, but in the valley of Jezreel. See you not, friends, that the Lord makes men what he calls them, if they only believe him ? No man ever acts honest, who does not believe he is honest. You do not have to tell a man who is a rascal that he is one for him to find it out. You do not have to tell an abandoned woman that she is an outcast. A sinner does not need to be told that he is a sinner. Ah, the Lord said unto a cowardly man, "Thou mighty man of valor," and it came to pass that he believed the word spoken, and he became the mightiest man of valor in the world. Oh, how glad we ought to be that the Lord should come down and show himself so graciously unto the man who has done evil in his sight, and who contradicts him to his face !

When the fire arose up out of the rock, consuming his sacrifice, and the Stranger disappeared mysteriously in the upcurling smoke of the incense, Gideon perceived that he was an angel, and he fell on his face, and cried, "Alas, O Lord God ! for I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face, and I shall die !" So great was his terror that the Lord came back to calm his fears and comfort his heart, and he saith unto him, "Peace be unto thee ; fear not, thou shalt not die." How Heavenly are these words ! Then Gideon arose and built an altar on the rock unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom—the Lord Sends Peace.

Brethren, the man whom the Lord names [confesses] shall not die; but "fear not," and "peace be unto thee" is for him, and an altar unto the peace-giving God. But there is a coming of the Lord in mighty power with all the holy angels about him, that will terrorize the men of this world until they will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them. These are the men going to and fro in the earth, doing evil continually in the sight of the Lord, rejecting his proffered salvation; and they all shall come to judgment. Let the Midianites look out. The gambling houses and other dens of infamy are not going on forever. Police courts will not continue forever. The sinners who die in their sins, and the ungodly who live in that day will be consumed and pass away, as the fat of lambs is consumed by fire and passes away in smoke. Lo, there arose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes! Every sinner who rejects the Lord Jesus Christ and dies in his sins, can read his own doom in the conflagration which took place before Gideon's eyes. It took a good deal to convince Gideon that the Lord told him the truth, when he said, "The Lord is with thee," and again, "Surely, I will be with thee;" but at length, it is all plain enough, and he wondered how he could have been so blind and so stupid. Brethren, perhaps some day you'll hear a voice, and look around, and see no one. You'll wonder and say within yourself, "Surely, some one spoke unto me." Have you never yet

heard the "still small voice" whispering unto you? Oh, may you have a heart to hear it and to understand it, for that is lover-talk from the Spirit-land! When the lover talks to his loved one he never talks loud. Ah, the Lord wants his own to know his voice, and be able to hear his slightest whisper.

The Lord now told Gideon what to do. The mighty man of valor must do brave things. The fire from the Rock showed that the Flesh is nothing; that unleavened cakes are nothing; family and tribe and nation are nothing. But the Rock is everything. The Lord is not going to deliver Israel by the arm of flesh. "Lo, I am with thee, Gideon, and I want you to break down the altar of Baal; break the idol to pieces, and cut down the grove and build an altar unto me on the rock, and offer on it the second bullock of seven years old, as a burnt offering, with the wood of the grove, which thou shalt cut down." How absolute and complete is this destruction of Baal imagery. Outwardly this is easily seen; inwardly it means the utter extirpation of the desires that lead to licentiousness and idolatry, and the establishment of the service and worship of the Lord.

Gideon is not yet brave enough to do this daring deed in open day, and so he took ten servants and did it by night. Early in the morning the men of the city beheld that their Baal altar and idol and grove had been destroyed, and they were furious. They began a strict investigation. It soon leaked

out that the youngest son of Joash had done the deed. One of Gideon's servants, though sworn to secrecy, had revealed it. The mob demanded of Joash that he should bring forth his son, that they might put him to death. Meanwhile Gideon had told his father and his brothers all about the Lord's appearance unto him and how he had acted on his command, and that Israel was to be delivered by his hand. "And this is the beginning of it," said he.

Now, Joash means despair. He had utterly despaired of any deliverance for Israel, but this news filled him with awe, and lifted him out of all that, and he felt proud and brave over his son, and the favor the Lord had shown his family. So he and Gideon and the rest of his sons came out and faced the mob of angry idolaters, and Joash said, "If Baal be a god, let *him* plead against my son, and if any of you dare to touch him let him be put to death while it is yet morning." Here is the highest sort of bravery where none was expected. Dazed and abashed, the mob stood aghast, and Gideon stepped forward and told how the Lord had said and done, and as Baal did not plead for himself, they all sent up a shout for the new hero, and nicknamed him, "Jerubbaal"—he who made Baal plead for himself. They now said, "Since the Lord is with you, we'll all stand by you." The news spread like wild-fire in a prairie. High hopes were soon entertained. Gideon took command of everything, and every

Israelite obeyed his voice. He seized a trumpet and blew it loud and long from the crags and peaks of the mountains, and he sent messengers throughout Manasseh, his own tribe, unto Ashur, unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali, and in a few weeks he had thirty-two thousand men gathered into various encampments, drilling for war. Great secrecy was observed to keep the real meaning of all this hid, especially the appearance of the Lord, from the Midianites.

The situation was new and very trying for Gideon. The Midianites had begun to take notice of his movements, and were gathering in their scattered forces, and getting ready to crush out the uprising of Israel. Gideon began to feel a little nervous and doubtful, and so he prayed, and said unto the Lord, "If thou wilt save Israel by my hand, as thou hast said, show me a sign." That is a very weak and a very mean speech. You would not have said it, would you? Perhaps if you had heard the petty, jealous quarrels, and had witnessed the cowardly spirit in Gideon's camps, and observed the next to no arms at all, you would have been troubled also. At any rate, Gideon asked the Lord to give him a sign, and one of his own devising. He hit upon a most difficult and ingenious idea. He said, "Behold, Lord, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; if there be dew on the fleece, and dry on the earth all around it, then I will know that Israel is to be delivered by my hand."

Alas, for these miserable doubts! There is always trouble in doubt. Gideon placed the fleece in the threshing floor, behind the wine-press. He passed a most feverish and miserable night. He could not sleep; he did not dare to tell any one. In the morning, very early, he went up to the threshing floor, and lo, there was no dew on the floor; but when he took up the fleece it was wet with the dew, and he wringed a bowlful of water out of it! He was greatly strengthened; but, perversely enough, he was not yet satisfied. Exactly the sign he had asked for has been given, and in a fullness to leave no room for doubting, and yet he insists on putting the Lord to another test. If you'll look into your own heart, I fear you will find all this there. Gideon feels it is wrong and mean to ask the Lord for another miracle, and so he implores him "not to let his anger be hot" against him. He spread the fleece again that night, and asked the Lord that the dew this time might be on the floor, and not on the fleece at all. And lo, in the morning, it was so. There was the fleece perfectly dry. He could not wring a drop out of it; but the threshing floor was wet with dew all over. Then, indeed, he believed, and tested the Lord no more.

I have told you this story to show you what a time the Lord had to get Gideon to believe his word. I am sure you can see yourself in all this. He had the same trouble with me. I am glad it is

all over and settled forevermore between the Lord and me. Gideon is Gideon now.

There is something else I must tell you before I close. It is this: As Gideon tested the Lord three times, so he was tested also the same number of times by the Lord. It is neither wise nor safe to thus test the Lord. It is an act of unbelief, and grows out of latent superstition. All fortune-telling and consulting of "departed spirits" has its root in this, likewise. I trust none of you will ever resort to anything of this degree. I pray you, brethren, to take the Lord at his word. That honors and glorifies him. Is he not worthy of belief? And you, sinner, will you not believe in him? He says unto you, "Whosoever shall confess *Me* before men, him will *I* confess also before my Father in Heaven."

Now, the Lord chose Gideon because he was weak. He took me for the same reason. This is to show that the power is of God, and not of man. This is the reason that so often the poor weak man becomes the best saint. So we all can have the same power to conquer the Midianites, and all other "ites", if we do but take the Lord at his word. Does he not say, "If you will confess me to be your King I will confess you also to be a citizen of my Kingdom?" Now, dear sinner, if you believe him, will you not come forward when the invitation is extended, and publicly acknowledge him to be your King? If you really want to be his man of valor

will you not enter his service, and go forth to serve and to obey his commands?

Gideon was now full of courage, and displayed great tact and intense energy. Soon he had gathered all his forces into a single camp. So ends the first part of the history of Gideon the Breaker.

GIDEON THE BREAKER.

PART SECOND.

The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.—Judges VII.

The word "sword" here denotes the Truth, or Word of the Lord. It has no reference to an earthly sword in a literal sense, and yet the transaction is the description of a battle between two opposing armies—the army of Gideon on one side, and the army of Midian on the other. These two armies denote a conflict between Heaven and Darkness, between the Lord and Satan. Historically, it is an actual transaction ; spiritually, it is enacted within us and about us continually.

Gideon is now qualified for high and noble action. And while there is great enthusiasm in the camp of Israel, up there on the side of Mount Gilead there is also much confusion and a perfect babel of tongues. Out of the thirty-two thousand men gathered there, only about ten thousand are really brave men ; but the cowards are great boasters. They are contending that one Israelite is equal to ten Midianites, and that one of them can easily put twenty Amalekites to flight. Apparently these braggarts are very anxious to bring on a battle, and they complain that Gideon is too slow, or else over cautious. This state of affairs is better known unto the Lord than unto Gideon. The spirit of the majority of

the Israelites is not pleasant in the sight of the Lord. Although it has been predetermined that Gideon shall smite the Midian host as one man—that means utter destruction, as if one hundred and thirty-five thousand men had but one neck to be broken—yet the Lord does not intend to afford the cowards a chance to boast how *they* won the greatest victory in the annals of the world.

Now, Gideon had pitched for the battle, when the Lord appeared unto him, and said: "Gideon, you have too many men for *me* to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, and say, Mine own hand hath saved me." So he told Gideon to draw his army up, and to proclaim it in the ears of all, that whosoever is fearful and afraid may freely depart from Mount Gilead, only they must go round about, so the enemy shall not see it.

Gideon drew them up in line, near the Well of Harod, which means the Well of Astonishment, because what happened there so astonished Gideon and all his trusty ones. When the proclamation had been made, there ensued moments of dead silence and awful suspense. The cowards trembled and looked furtively at one another along the lines, and then one here and one there dropped out to the rear, and directly they were falling out by the tens, and then by the hundreds, until it seemed almost as if the whole army would melt away! Such a scene was never witnessed before

and never since. It was indeed a trying time for Gideon. This is the Lord's *first* test. You remember how Gideon tested the Lord three times; first, with the kid offering, and then twice with the fleece?

But Gideon was not dimayed. The Lord's words were in his heart, "Surely *I* will be with thee, and thou *shalt* smite the Midianites as one man." Every man who believed *that* was a brave man, and he who did not was a coward. Gideon knew the Lord would keep his word. Ah, brethren, the Lord never goes back on *his* word. You can always depend upon him, sinner. He says that he will confess you before God if you shall confess him before men. He will keep his word. He also says that if you deny him before men, he will deny you also before God. He will keep his word.

When the reckoning was made, and his army had been reorganized, Gideon found that he had only ten thousand left. Twenty-two thousand had sneaked away. But he said, "Lord, it is all right; this is enough for me, if it is enough for thee." But he could not sleep that night for thinking and talking over the wholesale desertion, and his astonishment grew as he learned who it was that had run away. Who do you imagine they were? Why, the very men who had done the boasting and had been most officious, and given the most advice and trouble! I have felt the power of this. The world is built that way. Oh, how a crowd either cows or

attracts ! How men and women want to be in the biggest crowd, and do not want to stand where the faithful few hold the fort or fight the battles of the Lord. The question is not, "Do you have good meetings? How many are converted?" but "Do you have a crowd?"

After Gideon recovered a little from his astonishment, he began to feel a relief; a burden had been rolled away, and before the sun set the next day he was really glad that the cowards were all gone; everything moved on so smoothly now. Yet it was a severe test for the ten thousand, but they stood it manfully. How the Lord loved Gideon and the ten thousand ! Only ten thousand left, and one hundred and thirty-five over there, on the other side of the valley, thoroughly armed and equipped, with a multitude of camels. That night the Lord spoke unto Gideon again, and said, "The people are yet too many for me." And he told Gideon to bring them all down near the Well of Harod, in the direction of the Midianites, encamped along the hill of Moreh. *Moreh* means stretching out, and was so named from the fact of the Midian army being stretched out along its sides and in the valley. There, by the Well of Astonishment, the Lord said, "I will try the ten thousand for thee."

Gideon promptly obeyed this command, and when he had his army gathered there, he ordered, as the Lord had shown him, that they should come down to the well and drink in troops of fifty; and as they

did so, he stood there, and every one who lapped the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, taking the water up in the left hand, he commanded to stand over there on his right, and all who got down on their knees to drink, he made to stand on the left. And lo, there were only three hundred who lapped, putting the hand to the mouth, and nine thousand seven hundred stood on the left, they who had kneeled down. It is a moment of great suspense. The interest and curiosity is intense. And the Lord said unto Gideon, "By the three hundred men who lapped, will I save thee and deliver the Midianites into thine hand; let all the others go, every man into his place." The sensation created by this test was profound. That is the way the Lord formed Gideon's band. Out of thirty-two thousand he took three hundred. That's the way matters stood in Israel then, and I fear it is no better in Israel to-day. This object lesson should affright the church in all ages. Look out, brethren, see where you stand! A coward cannot fight in the battles of the Lord, neither can the brave Israelite who has no more discretion than to lay his arms by and kneel down in the presence of the enemy. Keep your shield of faith up, and your breastplate of righteousness on. "Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth," and cover your feet with "the preparation of the gospel of peace." "Take the helmet of salvation," and, "above all, take the shield of faith, and the Sword of the Spirit, which

is the word of God." Only when thus equipped can any soldier of the cross fight the battles of the Lord and "withstand the fiery darts of the wicked one."

This utter decimation is very impressive and instructive. It denotes that there is nothing in self, family, tribe or nation, and that the Word [sword] of the Lord and of Gideon [his word of testimony], alone shall prevail. Truly, I would not myself give the snap of my fingers for a soldier who would lie down to drink in the face of the foe. The apostle Paul says, "Stand! Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, for we wrestle not simply against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the darkness of this world, and against wicked spirits."

Ah, brethren, very few Israelites can go with the Lord to smite the Midianites. It is only the three hundred, who stood up to drink, who can smite in the battle and shout, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" O friends, it is truly wonderful when we can stand and face the enemy and smite him. May you every one be able to smite the Midianites and the Amalekites! For these *ites* are evil spirits. They denote the "principalities and powers of darkness," and are the forces of "the god of this world"—the "prince of the air." Spiritually, these "*ites*" are everywhere in this world; but the man who keeps the shield of faith up, and puts the armor of God on, can overcome them as one n n.

So, that evening, the Lord said unto Gideon, "To-night and to-morrow is the battle, and I want you to go down to the Midian camp and see what you can hear; but if thou fear to go down alone, take Phurah, thy servant [minister], and afterwards shall thine hands be strengthened to smite the host." This seems to indicate that Gideon was now a little bit faint-hearted. *Phurah* means branch, fruit-bearer, and here denotes the presence of the Holy Spirit. So, brethren, if any of you are too weak, or feel faint of heart at any time, take Phurah with you for your guide and comforter. Gideon and Phurah crept along in the early part of the night, and succeeded in passing the watch, and with their ears to a great tent, behold, they heard a man tell a dream he had unto his companion, and he said, "Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the camp of Midian, and came unto the tent and smote it, and turned it upside down, and it lay flat on the ground." And his companion answered and said, "This is nothing else than the sword of Gideon, the man of Israel, the son of Joash; for into his hand God hath delivered Midian and all the host." When Gideon heard "the dream and the interpretation thereof," his heart rejoiced exceedingly, for he perceived that the fear of the Lord was upon Midian, and he fell on his knees there and worshipped.

They then returned unto the camp of Israel, and Gideon said unto the three hundred, "Arise, for the

Lord *hath* delivered into your hand the host of Midian." See you not, friends, that the Lord was with the "mighty man of valor," in his own camp, to strengthen and encourage, and also in the camp of Midian to terrorize? Oh, the terror of the cake of barley bread and the interpretation thereof!

Brethren, let us never be afraid when the Lord is with us, and we are with him. He makes weak men to be strong, and brave men to be cowardly. Gideon's is the language of faith: "Arise, for the Lord *hath* delivered"—not shall—"Midian into your hands." Remember you not, how the Lord Jesus said unto the twelve, "All things whatsoever ye pray and ask for, believe that ye *have received* them, and ye *shall have them*"?

This is now the third and last test the Lord put on Gideon. He now aroused his little band, and he drew them up in *three* companies, and armed every man with a trumpet, a pitcher and a torch. And he stood before them and showed them how to do. He said, "Look on me and do likewise; and behold, when I come to the outermost part of the camp, it shall be as I do, ye shall do. When I blow the trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of all the camp, and shout, For the Lord and for Gideon." Then he put the trumpet to his mouth as if to blow on it, and he took a pitcher in his left hand, and put the torch in it and then withdrew it, and made as though he would break the pitcher, and flared the torch, and blew on the trumpet.

The pantomime was complete. Every one understood his part.

All is ready now, and they break ranks and move noiselessly down the mountain side and across the valley, spreading out so as to surround as much of the western end and southern side of the camp as possible. The Lord has prepared the way, and they reached the camp without being discovered, just after the middle watch had been set. Gideon and Phurah are with the centre band, and when all were in position, Gideon blew three loud, long blasts, and then they all blew on the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and flared the torches. Oh, what an unearthly roar, and crash, and flash it was for the Midianites! It seemed to the aroused Midian host as if all the lightning and thunder of Heaven and earth had suddenly burst upon them. The flashing torches and the braying trumpets gave the idea of overwhelming forces; the camels became unmanageable, and in terror and panic the Midianites fell upon each other. In a few hours the panic became a stampede and a rout. On, and on, came the roaring trumpets, and the flashing torches made the darkness beyond them appalling. The Midian camp was fired in hundreds of places, and smoke and flame and conflagration painted the sky, and glared luridly upon the mountains. The cowardly Israelites and the brave nine thousand seven hundred came shouting down upon the retreating foe from every quarter. Gideon and his band did nothing but blow the

trumpets and use their torches, advancing cautiously as the foe slashed and slaughtered each other, and retreated. The pursuit became hot, indeed, at the dawn of day, for fully twenty or twenty-five thousand Israelites had now begun to throw themselves upon the decimated and stampeded Midianites. But the chief woe was from Midian's own sword, for "the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, and against all the host," so that one hundred and twenty thousand men that drew the sword were slain.

The Midian army retreated and fled, the remnant as far as Beth-shittah, towards Zererath, and the men of Israel were gathered together from out Naphtali, Asher, Manasseh and Ephraim, and they came and took the Jordan fords. Beth-shittah means, place of thorns. There in the thorns, the remnant of Midian was couped up and compelled to surrender, about fifteen thousand men and the two Midian kings, Zebah and Zalmunna. The two princes who had commanded the army, Oreb and Zeb, were killed early in the night surprise. The two kings did their best to escape, and thus the host was left to its fate. After their capture, the kings were slain by Gideon's own hand, because they had slain two of his brothers at Mt. Tabor.

After this mighty deliverance had been duly celebrated in a national feast and sacrifice unto the Lord, the men of Israel came unto Gideon, and said unto him, "Rule thou over us, both thou and thy sons and thy sons' sons also, for thou hast saved

us out of the hand of Midian." But Gideon rejected the offer, and said unto them, "I will not rule over you ; the *Lord* shall rule over you." What a rebuke that was ! They did not forget it for many years. Everybody was happy in Israel but the twenty-two thousand cowards. They were marked men, and none of them ever recovered from it ; but the three hundred were the heroes of the land, and when they died were buried with great honors. As for Gideon, he was loved and admired by all. As a mark of the Lord's continued favor, it is written, "that he dwelt in his own house, and Gideon had three score and ten sons of his own body begotten . . . and he died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Orphrah of the Abiezrite."

Oh, how safe it is when the Lord is with you, and you are with him ! Now, this marvellous narrative is written out and placed in sacred history, and handed down to-night for our instruction, that we may see that Lord is Lord ; that God is God, and that man, no matter what his multitude, cannot stand before him, and that the power is not in Israel, the church. The Lord said unto Gideon, "*I* am with thee and thou *shalt* smite Midian as one man." Never was a battle like that fought and won before. Of Gideon's band there is no record of a single man slain. Israel was fully delivered, and the worship of the Lord fully re-established, and the people returned unto him and were kept by him as long as they were true unto him.

Now, dear friends, it is just so in the Christian life, in the Christian's warfare. Whether we shall be overcome by the Midianites and the Amalekites, depends on whether we "do evil in the sight of the Lord." If we prove faithful unto the Lord, and call upon our Saviour, he will save us and prepare us for victory over all foes—foes within, and foes without. But without loyalty unto him, we never can win the victory. Let's trust everything unto him; let's turn the whole matter over to the King who is Lord of all? Let him manage all. Then he will bring us off more than conquerors.

The devil does not want you to believe this. He seeks to make every soul believe it is too good to be true; or failing in that, he seeks to make you rely on self. There is a bias about the human heart which nurtures doubt, and sinning creates darkness. The salvation of Jesus Christ is so marvellously free and wondrously glorious, that many look at it and conclude that it is too good for them. Now, brethren, how shall the world of doubters be convinced? In the night of his betrayal the Lord prayed that his disciples might be one; that they might love each other, even as he loves them, that the world should be convinced that God sent him. O friends, this world needs more of this demonstration of love!

We forget to remember that Satan is the god of this world, and prince of the darkness of sin; we forget how he seeks to permeate all our emotions,

and to live in our thoughts. He darkens the understanding, and sometimes even through their spiritual affections leads saints astray. Ah, we need to feel the sweet and comforting power of the Holy Spirit every hour. It will not do, because all is well to-day, to imagine it will always be so. Here is a gardener who says, "Nothing shall grow in my garden but the plants and flowers I plant there." He cultivates the ground; digs deep; mellows it, and plants it. There is not a clod in it; not a weed or spear of grass to be seen. It contains nothing but what he has sown. He goes on his way, saying, "In a month or two I will return and admire my garden of flowers and plants, and I will bring my friends to behold its beauty;" and lo, when he comes, the weeds and grass are rank and tall; but the plants and flowers are small and puny, and can scarcely be seen at all. So it is with the human heart. Evil weeds and grasses grow quick and tall, if the Lord is not in our thoughts continually over all.

Oh, hear his sweet invitation call! "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Here he contrasts his service and burden with Satan's, and declares, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Thus we can always know whether we are in the Lord's service or not. If the yoke galls and the

burden is heavy, be assured that it is Satan's ; for the Lord's yoke is easy, and his burden is as light as a feather, for it is love's own.

Brethren and friends, these things are as practical and more urgent than the bread and meat we eat. Why shall we not be as wise in the spiritual life as in the physical ? Why should the devil cheat us all along the line of life ? Why should we not be kept by the power of the Lord, and be led by the Holy Spirit ? Oh, be Satan's slave no more ! The Lord *is* with you, only believe in him, and *he* will make you a member of Gideon the Breaker's band. May you all be brave and true for Jesus' sake, and your own. Amen.

CHRIST AT JACOB'S WELL.

“And he must needs go through Samaria”—John IV., 4.

“Give me to drink.”—John IV., 7.

“And Jesus must needs go through Samaria.”
Now, dear friends, I want to tell you why he must needs go through Samaria. That implies some urgent, immediate divine reason for it. There lived, in a certain town of that country, a woman of peculiar relations. All the men admired her, and all the women shunned her. She did not bear a very good reputation in the little village of Sychar. She was a creature of fine eyes and a complexion wondrous fair. But, notwithstanding her reputation, she was religious. There are few men or women who do not have some streak of piety in them. I trust to-night you will see that it is on account of this fallen creature the Lord *needs must* go through Samaria. When, by a direct route, he should have gone from Judea to Galilee, he went far out of his way, that he might meet this woman at Jacob's well. He met her there, on the mountain side, where she was accustomed to come at the noon hour, to draw water. The Lord had timed his journey so as to arrive at Jacob's well just a little in advance of twelve o'clock noon. And then he sent his disciples down into the village of Sychar, to buy something to eat, and sat himself down on the curb of the well. A dusty, wayworn traveler was he.

He was sitting there, waiting, waiting, "grand and fair." Soon he saw the woman coming up the winding pathway, with a jar on her head, to draw water. When she saw a strange man, who looked like a Jew, she hesitated and halted. But then she came on up, thinking that when he should see her he would get up and move away; but, instead of doing that, he spoke unto her, and said, "Give me to drink." She was now sorely astonished, and said unto him, with a certain degree of asperity, "Sir, how is it that thou, being a Jew, asketh drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria?"

She raised a racial prejudice on him. The reason for this was, that the pure-blooded Jews refused to have any social intercourse or dealings with the Samaritans, who were a mixed race. Nearly all the Jew population of Samaria had been carried off into bondage long years before, and riff-raff of Eastern countries colonized in their place. Then the Samaritans, on account of this ostracism, had established a temple for worship on Mount Gerizim, and taught that there was the *true* place to worship, and not at Jerusalem. So this woman was astonished that he spoke unto her, contrary to the social custom, and religious and race prejudice; but that he should ask drink of her, though the most natural thing in the world, seemed to her inexplicable. He knew all her thoughts and trouble, and so he said unto her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, 'Give me

to drink,' thou wouldst have asked of him, and *he* would have given thee *living* water."

Her wonder was now very great. She felt she was surely in the presence of some extraordinary personage. She had never heard such words before. He had not only overleaped custom and prejudice as if they were mere spider webs, but had he not spoken mysteriously of himself and of the gift of God, and generously offered *her* "living water" for the asking? Struggling within herself, and half ashamed that she had refused him a drink, she said at length, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. From whence, then, hast thou that 'living water'? Art *thou* greater than *our* father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?"

Observe how shrewdly she argues, and apprehends the greatness of his pretension. Besides, she has the only rope by which the water could be drawn, and is holding on to it. The well is probably one hundred feet deep. She does not yet see that he is trying to instruct her in divine things. He began with the natural water of Jacob's well, and said, "Won't *you* give *me* a drink?" If he had been a man of Samaria she would have drawn the water and given him a drink without a word. Alas, under how many like weak and foolish considerations does the sinner still refuse the Lord a drink! How often, perhaps, you have refused the Lord a

drink, and under some devil's pretext you may be still declining his gracious invitation, and giving him the cold shoulder! Now, the Lord did not need a drink out of Jacob's well, but he had to have some pretext for opening a conversation with this woman, for he has come there to reveal unto her who *he* is; he is going to let her have a Glimpse of Heaven. That woman is to be favored above all the men and women of Samaria with the first communication of the secret of Jesus Christ. He intends to reveal unto *her* what was never before told to any mortal being. He is not a Jew, as she took him to be. Never do you dare to think that of the "Son of Man." He is Son and Heir of the perfect Adamic man, before he sinned and became a divided creature. But she took him to be a Jew from outward appearance, and raised the race and worship question on him.

Now, she really had no earthly interest in the quarrel between the two races, but she had heard it much talked about, time and again; and so she talked and argued against the Son of God, without knowing what she did. He had to lead her mind away from all that. Hence he said, "If you only knew the gift of God, and who *I* am, *you* would ask *me*, and *I* would give you *living water*." "Ah, sir," said she, "the well is deep, and you have nothing to draw with. Are you greater than our father Jacob?" Her mind is still on Jacob's well; but Christ said unto her, "Whosoever drinketh of this

water shall thirst again, but whosoever drinketh of the water *I* shall give him, shall never thirst ; but *it* shall become *in him* a well of water springing up unto eternal life."

And this is what she has always, betimes, longed for. He has shown her that she has only to ask for it. She sees how wondrously generous this is. It charms her. *He* raises no question of sin, or race, or character. And this speech to a woman of the town ! Her heart melts within her. She said within herself, "He is not raising the sin question with me ; I wonder what he would say if he only knew *what* I am." Everybody around her had raised that question on her. She had raised it on herself a thousand times. It did not need that the Son of God should come and raise it also. Ah, brethren, Jesus Christ never came to do such dirty business. He well knew *what* and *who* she is. He knows just as well all about you and me. He sees our thoughts and knows our deeds. I am glad of it. Are you ?

Oh, how adroitly he leads her on to ask him who he is ; to ask him for *living* water ! He seems *so* anxious to *give* the "water" he has, that she cries out at last, "Sir, give me this water, that I may thirst no more, neither come here to draw." Ah, the well is deep, indeed, but the Lord has drawn from it the very drink he sought and longed for. Jacob's well is almost forgotten. It is that something in her spirit, which a greater than Jacob is

pleading for, and if she gives it unto him, he will make her brighter than an angel of Heaven. Ah, when she thought of him and Jacob together, she had begun to want to know who he is. She had boasted that only Jacob and his children and his cattle had drunk of that well, but he is saying, "*Whosoever* shall drink of the water I shall give him, shall never thirst again"; and she perceives that he is really inviting *her* to ask him for it, and though she feels quite ashamed to ask him, his voice and manner is so inviting, so gracious, that she cries out, "Sir, give *me* that water, that I thirst not, neither come here to draw." Now she gives up Jacob's well. Poor creature! despite all her pride, she is tired of thirst and of coming up the mountain to draw water for some one down there in the village. So, if there is any way of getting out of this toiling and thirsting, she wants to know it.

Not yet does she fully apprehend what Jesus is talking about. While he has been thinking only of divine things, she has been thinking mostly of the earthly, but her spirit is stirred within her, and she has Heavenly movings. She has made a beginning. Now that he has carried her as far as he can along that line, he says something that startles her: "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." She gave him a piercing, startled look; but she saw only sweetness in his face, and so, blushing, she said, "I have no husband." Twenty minutes ago she

would no more have made that confession to a stranger than she would have renounced Jacob's well ; she would rather have been torn limb by limb ; but now *he* has won *her* confidence, and she is ready to confess the dark secret of *her* life unto him. But he needs must tenderly anticipate her at this point, and so he saith, "Thou hast well said, 'I have no husband,' for thou hast had *five* husbands, and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband."

Now, dear friends, she has never had any husband at all. She has lived with five different men, and never been married to any of them. This is the woman the Lord "must needs go through Samaria" to meet at Jacob's well. The service and compassion of this is world-embracing. I am very particular that you shall see deeply into how the Lord deals with her. He didn't say, "Get out of my sight ! I'll have nothing to do with such a bad woman. I have no water of life for you." On the contrary, he talks of her paramours as husbands. No mother ever talked so tenderly to a ruined daughter. Truly it is the *goodness* of God that leadeth to repentance. How truly noble Jesus is ! He is not throwing her sin up to her ; he does not upbraid her. He said, "Go, call thy husband," well knowing what he is. He only spoke of her errant relations, to let her know that he knew all about her, without being told ; that she might believe in him, and to save her from going into painful details.

So he still said unto her, "Go, call thy husband, and come unto me." But she did not go instantly. There is another perplexing question in which she is deeply interested, and she has found one who can solve that, as well as tell her "all the things she ever did"; so she said unto him, "Sir, I perceive that thou *art* a prophet. Our fathers worship in this mountain [Gerizim], but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place to worship." This question troubles many unto this day. It is at the bottom of shrines, pilgrimages, and "low" and "high" churchism. Thus she is full of theological views and religious notions, notwithstanding her dissolute life. "*Our* fathers, the best men who preach among us, say that this mountain is the only true place to worship, but the Jews say Jerusalem is the only place; now, will you tell me *which* is the right place?" The Lord quickly and gladly said, "Woman, believe *me*, the hour cometh, and is *now come*, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor at Jerusalem worship the Father; but the true worshipers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in Truth. God is Spirit, and they that worship *him* must worship in Spirit and Truth."

Now he made this revelation unto *her*. Never before had it been revealed to any creature on the earth. Never before did any one reveal who God is. Thus One has come from Heaven, and said, "God is Spirit." He has told this woman the secret of God and opened Heaven unto her. He leaves off talking

of "water" and "living water," and talks of "spirit" and of "truth." At first he said, "The hour *is* coming." He knew not then just *when*, but ere he had finished the sentence it *dawned*, and he added, "and is *now* come!" Ah, brethren, what an atmosphere they two were in! What a Heavenly place beside Jacob's well! Father Jacob never dreamed of what should come to pass at his well.

Wrought now up to the highest pitch of mental and spiritual wonder and light, the woman exclaimed, "Sir, *I* know when Messiah is come *he* will declare all things unto us." Unwittingly she named him, and he, rising up in great majesty, declared unto her, "*I* that speak unto *thee*, *am* *he*."

Just then his disciples arrived, returning from Sychar. What a relief this diversion is to the woman. It gives her time to reflect, and to recover from the power of the revelation. She is now fully convinced, and ready to obey his command, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." So engaged in mind and heart is she, that she ran down the pathway into Sychar, leaving the water-pot she had brought at the well. There it is, beside the well, a mute witness of her conversion.

His disciples were astonished to behold him talking to a woman, and especially to a woman of Samaria, but none of them durst ask him any question about it. He seemed so enraptured that they could not disturb him. So they spread the meal they had brought in the shade of a tree near by,

and waited patiently awhile for him to come and eat; but there he sat, enrapt. They could stand it no longer, and so they began to say, "Master, Master, won't you come and eat?" And he said unto them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Oh the drink the woman had given him! But his disciples knew it not, and said among themselves, "Hath any man brought him to eat?" Knowing their thought, Jesus said unto them, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." So they ate that meal alone.

And now the woman has reached the town. Her heart is so full of the Truth of Jesus and of the Spirit of God that she has not once thought of the water-pot nor of the dinner that was never cooked. First of all, she thought of her husband, and she ran and told him, and then all the other men she knew, "to come and see a man who hath told me all the things I ever did—is not this the Messiah?" She is so eager, so excited and enthusiastic, as she tells over and over again what had happened at Jacob's well, that every one left his employment and ran after her up the mountain side, and there, sure enough, still sitting on the curb of the well, was the Messiah. And she brought them all into his presence. That was enough. They were all converted by accepting him. Then they, looking wonderingly and gladly upon him, a strange something welling up within them, invited and beseeched him to come down into the village, and to abide

with them. He graciously accepted their invitation, and abode there two days. In the streets of Sychar he preached the good news unto them all, showing himself to be the Prince of the Skies.

Many more of them believed on him because of his own word. He convinced them just as he had convinced the woman, and some of these said unto her, "Now we believe on him, not because of what you told us, but we have heard him ourselves, and we *know* that he is, indeed, the Christ, the Saviour of the world." But she did not mind this. She was too glad in her heart to be offended. We see here what a woman could do, and that woman a creature of many unmarried husbands. I have shown you what question Jesus raised with her, and how she refused him a drink from Jacob's well. Is not this divine way better than all our ways? Why does he take a woman like this? There are several reasons. One is, he knew that when the people of the town found a woman like this could be saved, they would conclude that the Messiah is a *Saviour* indeed—"the Saviour of the world." By taking the worst social sinner of the town he plainly showed that every other sinner could partake of the water of life freely. But above all this, and much beside, he meant to show that S-o-n, son, is greater than S-i-n, sin. He embraced the man in his mercy, thus showing no distinction between the two.

His action in this case was not singular with him, though entirely foreign to the pious notions of most

religionists. It seemed to be his delight to take the worst physical and most desperate moral cases to manifest his power and his compassion. This is the case in all Scripture. It is not anywhere said that he told the woman she must give up the husband who was not her husband. He did not need to tell her that; he told her how to worship God truly, and revealed himself unto her. She received from him a principle that soon settled all the irregularities of her social life. He began at the fountain; and soon the stream of her life ran clean and pure. O sinner, let Jesus in.

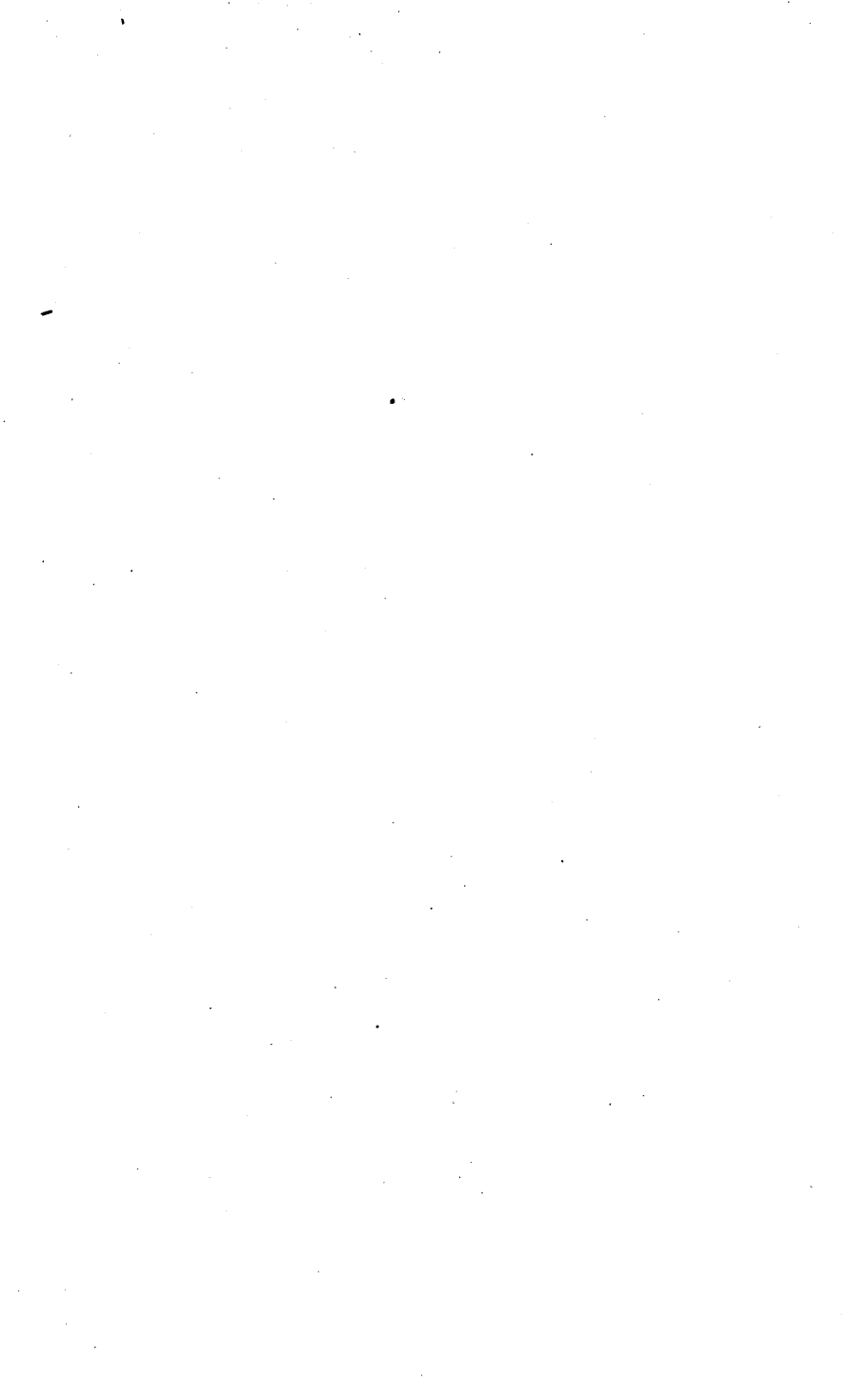
Ah, men and women, we all know what sinners we are by nature, but we do not all know that Jesus is the Christ. Now Jesus said unto this woman, "I am the Messiah," and she believed him, left her water-pot, and ran to tell it all around. That's what saved her. She was saved because she received *him*. What were her past sins to him, or to her then?

Now, sinners naturally divide themselves into two classes. There is the self-righteous sinner. He does not cheat his neighbor, nor beat his wife, and prides himself on paying his honest debts. He thinks he is to get into Heaven because he is not a drunkard or a thief. The women of this class think they are all right, because they move along in good society. Then there is the second class; they know and avow themselves to be sinners. They make no pretense to righteousness. Satan makes the first

class believe that they are good enough to get into Heaven without a Saviour, and he persuades the second class to think they are *too* wicked to be saved. Thus he seeks to deceive and drag both down into everlasting destruction. Brother, sister, though you had but one sin to answer for, you cannot settle for it. You are just as helpless as though you had five hundred. Being in the flesh is, alas, Self. It is a condemned house. The more any man or woman builds upon and adorns Self, the greater will be the ruin. So Christ is not only saving the woman of Sychar, but he is teaching all the world this, that he came into it not to condemn sinners, but to save as many as shall believe that he is the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. You can have no idea how hard this woman's life had been. She had gone on and on, seeking rest, and finding it not, until the stranger at Jacob's well said, "Won't you give me a drink?" Yet how fertile she was in prejudice and argument. But ever he brought her back to a consideration of "the living water," which, said he, "I will give to *whosoever* asketh it of me." There was *something*, deep down within her, that began to respond to this generous offer and glorious prospect. At length, after most gentle wooing, she became willing. There was a *spirit thirst within her that cried out*. She accepted him as her Lord.

Under the symbol of "water," he spoke unto her of the Heavenly truth, that is, of himself, the

Messiah, who should declare all things; and by "the living water" he figured the Spirit of God, which brings the dead to life eternal, and makes the lost to be found. Thus he opened the Heavenly fold unto her, and was himself the Door, the Life, the Light, and the Way. She could now worship anywhere in the power of the Truth and the Spirit. Thus we come and receive the eternal life, which he puts within every true believer. This is the life that never perishes. The flesh life perishes; it is passing painfully away, day by day; but the "inner man"—the Christ man—formed within the believer, is "the hope of glory." O sinner, if you will come this night unto Christ and confess him before men, he will give you that "life" by which you shall live forever, and never die. Let the fact that Jesus "must needs go through Samaria" for that woman's sake, and yours, be not in vain. But arise thou, and come and partake of the water of life, and thou shalt be forever blest.





THE ESCAPE OF THE SPIES.

THE SCARLET LINE.

"And she said unto the men, I know that the Lord hath given you the land . . . for the Lord your God is God in Heaven above and on earth beneath. Now, therefore, swear unto me by the Lord, since I have showed you kindness, that ye will also show kindness unto my father's house, and give me a true token that ye will save alive my father and my mother and my brethren, and my sisters, and all they have, and deliver our lives from death. And the men answered, Our lives for yours if ye utter not our business. Behold, when we come into the land thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window. And she sent the men away, and they departed, and she bound the scarlet line in the window."—Joshua II.

Brethren, there can be no escape from death, no remission of sins without the shedding of blood; a pure life given for the impure. And she sent the men away, and "bound a scarlet line in the window." Her name is Rahab, which means Proud. She had been a proud, self-willed girl; she was fair and beautiful, with wondrous eyes and ruddy complexion. Her pride and beauty brought her into a dissolute life, and she is now known as Rahab the harlot. She is the kind of woman that people generally do not want to associate with. She lives in Jericho, in a house on the wall of the city, near the great gate. She is keeping an inn, and spins flax as a sort of pretext. Her father and her mother, and her brothers and sisters do not care to have much to do with her.

At this time the whole land is profoundly stirred and terrorized by the appearance of Israel on the east side of Jordan, just opposite Jericho. They have come up from their long and weary wanderings in the wilderness, and recently made war on the Amorites, and overcame them, killing their two kings, Sihon and Og, and utterly destroyed the whole tribe. In numbers they seem like a swarm of grasshoppers. The fear of Israel fills the whole land with terror. Joshua—which means Jesus, a forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ, just as John the Baptist was also—is encamped at Shittim, and is making ready to cross over Jordan, and invade and conquer all the nations on the west side of Jordan.

Before making an attempt to cross Jordan, which is now at flood tide and out of its banks, in the face of Jericho, a walled and well-defended city, Joshua sent two young men to secretly view the land, and make a report on the character of the people and the defenses of Jericho. It is a hazardous undertaking. If caught they would be put to death as spies. They disguise themselves the best they can, and enter into Jericho by the gate, pretending to be traders, and “lodge in the house of an harlot.” This house is on the wall, near the gate, and is the resort of the rough and ruder sort of travelers. It just suits them for their purpose. They are less likely to be discovered there, and can find out all they want to know about the real sentiment of the

inhabitants. They have been there several days, and are about ready to take their departure. They soon discovered that Rahab is not only well posted about political and military affairs on that side of Jordan, but that she also knows, in a general way, all about Israel since the Lord had dried up the Red Sea for them. By little hints thrown out here and there, they found out that they could trust her, and they owned up that they are Israelites, and told her wherefore they had come. She told them everything she knew, and that the terror of Israel is upon them all; that all hearts are faint, and not a bit of courage left in any of the men.

Just at this point the two Israelites fell under suspicion, and the king of Jericho sent a band of armed men to Rahab, saying, "Bring out the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house, for they are come to search out all the country." This shows that they know that she is entertaining the spies. It is a critical moment, but she very adroitly and promptly said, "There came men unto me, but I knew not whence they were, and it came to pass at about the time of shutting the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out, whither I know not; but pursue after them quickly, and ye will overtake them." This seemed so plausible and patriotic that they started in hot pursuit on the way to Jordan to the fords, and the gate was closed after they had gone out.

Then she took the two spies and hid them on the roof of her house. They lay down, and she covered them over with stalks of flax. About midnight, when everybody had retired, and all was quiet, she made a stout cord of threads of scarlet flax, and she let them down from her window on the outside of the wall, and told them to escape to the mountains and remain there three days, until their pursuers should have returned and given up watching for them, "and then," said she, "ye can go your way safely." But before this she made them promise to save her and her entire family alive, and had them confirm it with an oath "in the name of the Lord."

She had a mind to entertain and to protect them. She had made up her mind on a certain subject before they came. She had reflected, and had reached a conclusion. The conclusion is this: "That the God of Israel is the God in Heaven above and on earth beneath." I want to show you that this faith saves. It saved Rahab the harlot, and it saved me. It will save any man or woman who will act upon it.

Now, the Jerichoites worshipped some god. Everybody has some sort of god. These people called on thier god to save them, but Rahab found out that the Lord only is God in Heaven above and on earth beneath. Yet she is a harlot. No respectable woman in that city will associate with her. Her father and her mother, her brothers and sisters

do not have anything to do with her. They never come to visit her. There she lives on the wall of the city. This wall is fifty or sixty feet high, and forty or more feet broad at the top, with watch-towers scattered all along it.

Rahab was glad when the Israelitish spies came. She knew them at once, and took the first good opportunity and said privately unto them, "I know ye, who ye are, and I know that the Lord your God is God in Heaven." She made their God her God; she accepted the Lord as her God—that brought salvation by the scarlet line. She made their cause her own; she staked her life on it, and saved it. The men were glad beyond expression when they heard this.

Her faith and loyalty was soon put to a test. She hid the spies, and, unmoved, faced the king's officers and told them a most plausible lie. They believed it, and marched off on the wrong scent. The gate is closed, and at midnight she confers with the spies on the roof of her house. She knew what to do, and did it; she knew what she wanted, and asked for it, and received it. She made a scarlet line to lower them by; but first she enters into a treaty with them and binds them by an oath in the name of the Lord God. They are glad to make it, and swear the oath, and give her "the true token," one that all Israel knows to be true—the blood red token.

The scarlet line she holds in her hand answers for it. "This cord," said she, "I twisted from flax I dyed and spun into thread myself, and I am going to let you escape by it. You will owe your lives to it and to me." And they said, "Our lives for yours." "But," said she, "there is my father and my mother and my brethren and my sisters; I will not agree unless you pledge me that they shall be saved alive also." This is an admirable trait, and they admired her for standing by her *blood*. The compact was fully agreed to and duly ratified; only she is "not to utter a word of their business, and gather all her family into her house on the wall," and the true token is to be the scarlet line. They are not to be responsible for any of her blood with their blood "if they are not found in her house," when the city is taken.

Brethren, she is better to her father and her mother, her brothers and sisters than they are to her. They were glad of the shelter she offered them, and gathered very hopefully under the harlot's roof. I want you to see what the harlot can do and become. Do you wonder that God looks very deep into the hearts of men and women, and when he finds anything that looks like faith in him that he saves them?

The spies gladly promised everything; but she said, "Swear it by the Lord your God," and they swore it. And they said, "Put this scarlet line in the window, and when we see it, the true token, we

will spare your house and bring all your family out alive and treat you kindly." O blood of bloods! There's the scarlet line. It took blood to make scarlet in that line, and it takes blood to save the sinner from death.

The spies can now remain safely no longer, and so she lets them down by that line, and they escape with their lives, and carry their report to Joshua. When he had heard the wondrous tale they had to tell, he was greatly rejoiced, and ratified all they had done concerning Rahab. All Israel was glad over it and greatly encouraged. Rahab is Israel's first convert.

Now, let me explain how the spies came to take the scarlet line for the true token of life and salvation. They remembered that, back in Egypt, when the Death Angel passed over the land the Lord had said, "The *blood* shall be to you for a *token* upon the houses where ye are, and when I see *it*, I will pass over you." So, that's the token here—the scarlet line bound in the window. Mark this: when Rahab received the spies, she received Joshua, and receiving him, she received God. Remember how our Lord said unto his disciples, "They who receive you, receive me, and they that receive me, receive him that sent me."

She received God's messengers by faith, and was saved from *death* when all the others in Jericho perished because of their unbelief. If they had believed as she believed all would have escaped death. All

Rahab's house escaped by the faith of one person. That's a wondrous stretch of God's mercy.

When her family found out her secret they were no longer ashamed of her. I tell you that the distinctions we make in this world are mighty thin. We can't tell whom we are talking about. Rahab the harlot was the only person in all Jericho God had respect to. You here see how God takes the weak and immoral things of this earth to confound the mighty and the moral. That's the secret of some of the best Christians in the land and of some of the greatest preachers. We do not know who these two spies were; they are not named; but we know who Rahab is, and her profession is described.

Now, let's turn our attention to Jericho. Just imagine a strongly fortified, walled city of forty or fifty thousand inhabitants, with all the population of the surrounding territory gathered into it. Joshua had no appliances for battering down the walls, but the Lord appeared unto him, and told him how to take Jericho in *seven* days. So all Israel crossed over Jordan on dry ground. This is the Lord's plan. The priests shall take up the ark of the covenant, and seven priests with seven ram's horns as trumpets shall go before the ark, and the armed men of Israel shall go in advance of the trumpets, and all the rest of the people shall follow after the ark. Thus marching, they shall encompass, surround the city once each day for six days, and then seven times on the *seventh* day. Imagine the scene!

Forty thousand armed men marching before, followed by the seven trumpet-blowing priests, and the priests carrying the sacred ark, and all the camp bringing up the rear! Not a word is spoken. The Lord imposed this order of march, and the times and the days, and utter silence. Not a word above a whisper is heard. Not a word is spoken until Joshua gives the command, and then all are to send up a mighty shout. Oh, the silence of this march! Nothing but the rat-a-tat of the trumpets. What a sight to see!

For many days not a soul could get in or out of Jericho. It was thoroughly prepared to stand a great siege; and when they saw the mighty host thus deployed and marching round the city, they did not know what to make of it. The very mystery of it, and the *seven* priests and *seven* trumpets filled them with awe and dread. But as nothing seemed to come of it, and as the same silent procession was going on and on, day after day, only to go back into camp again, the Jerichoites began to breathe easier, and came out and lined the wall of the city to observe it. Some even had the temerity to make fun of it, and began to say, "These people don't know anything about war; guess they never saw a big walled city before. Did anybody ever hear of fighting with rams' horns?"

Then came the seventh day, and lo, at the dawn, Joshua has his forces start out in the same order; but when they have encompassed it once, instead of

going back into camp, they keep on and on until they are going round for the seventh time on the seventh day!

In all this marching, there hung the scarlet line from the window of the house on the wall! The two messengers looked for it early, and saw it with gladness, and Joshua saw it. The two brave spies pointed it out to him. Ah, he never sent a coward on the Lord's business! He got the right men—men he could trust to go, and find out what they went for, and come back with a correct report. So, when Joshua came up to view the city himself, these two young men were by his side. You can just see them. They conduct him to a certain spot, and cry, "Look! look!! Joshua, don't you see that scarlet line bound in the window? That's Rahab's house, She asked us for a true token, and we gave her that." He said, "I see it; that's all right; I'll remember. And I now command you two, when the proper time comes, when the wall falls down, to go into her house and bring her and all her family out."

It was not long until nearly everybody in the camp of Israel knew about the scarlet line, and every one wanted to see it. It is fully understood that she and her household are the only persons in all the city who are not to be put to death. "Only Rahab the harlot shall live, and all in the house with her, because she hid the messengers."

And it came to pass as they finished encompassing the city seven times, that Joshua said unto the

people, "Shout! for the Lord hath given you the city." And all the people shouted with a mighty shout, and all the trumpets brayed, and lo, "the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city." A total destruction ensued, and it means something terribly significant. It is a picture lesson unto the whole world, teaching the sinner that there is no escape for him if he dies in his sinful nature. All the men, women, children and beasts in Jericho perished, except where the scarlet line told of her who knew and confessed that the Lord is God.

The two young men saw that Rahab's house fell not, and they marched forward with the rest, and brought her and her family and all she had out and placed them in a tent, "outside the camp of Israel, and she dwelleth in Israel unto this day;" that is, she thus dwelt at the time the Book of Joshua was written. That's salvation! She is saved alive and kindly treated. A little later she was adopted as an Israelite. How glad her family are to be in her company now! By her faith she caused them all to be saved alive.

Now, brethren, if there was no type in this destruction of Jericho it would be a very cruel transaction; but Jericho is a type of Unbelief in every human breast, and its destruction is for the warning and instruction of untold millions in the many generations. Remember, "He that believeth and is •

baptized shall be saved ; but he that *believeth not* shall be damned"—destroyed. In Jericho the believing Rahab was saved and her family by *her* faith, but all the unbelievers perished. It is going on ceaselessly ; the great drama will be rehearsed finally in the end of this present age. Every soul [life] that binds the scarlet line in the window shall be saved. Every man and woman and child in that city might have been saved. So every one in this city *may* be saved ; but, alas, they *will* not be.

In the Jericho of your unbelief, if you make out what Rahab did, that the Lord is God, you'll be baptized. You will take unto yourself the true token. By saving Rahab the harlot, the Lord stoops to show how very willing *he* is to save all who believe on his name. St. Paul says, "By *faith* the harlot Rahab perished not with those *who believed not*."

Now, this woman was at first put outside the camp, but after a little while they considered her ceremonially cleansed, and they let her come in as one of them. Thus she became an Israelite indeed. She is one of the four women mentioned in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus Christ. She was courted and won by a true-blue Israelite, named Salmon, who was, perhaps, one of the two spies ; and by her he begat Boaz, who married Ruth, and begat Obed, who begat Jesse, who begat David the king, and through this royal line came Mary the Virgin, mother of Jesus. The four women honored by being named in Matthew's genealogy are Tamar,

Rahab, Ruth and Mary. Tamar was at first like Rahab, a harlot, and afterwards an honored wife. Ruth and Mary were of spotless reputation. Two were pure and two were not, and over this line of descent came the Son of Man, the Son of God—the Saviour of sinners.

Do you wonder that Jesus took up women of the Tamar and Rahab class? This is the profoundest lesson ever taught this foolish world. It is this: that no one is to be saved because he is moral, and no one is going to hell because of immorality; but one and all may be saved by believing that God is God, and that Christ is Lord. When Rahab believed this she could ask for “the true token,” and it was given unto her in the scarlet line. You cannot get God to go back on the *blood* of the sin-offering. When he sees that, his true token of life and mercy, he passes over our sins, and saves us alive.

Now, concerning the scarlet line in the life of Christ, St. John declares, “I saw a soldier take a spear and pierce his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” Here is blood [life] for the sinner’s sins, and water for the cleansing of the saint’s ways. Here is the true token of a pure life for the many in their sins—of the Holy One of Israel dying^o for the unholy of all the world. John, who understood the Lord and his gospel better than any of the rest, declares this as an eye-witness, and testifies that it is true. He declares that Jesus came

not by blood alone, but by [in] water, and by [in] blood; that is, in Truth [as the Word] and in the Flesh, and hence he arose from the dead, and ascended back into Heaven, and "sat down at the right hand of God."

Whosoever believes in this true token of God's love for Christ and the sinner, and confesses him before men, is saved by the scarlet line, for without the shedding of blood, of a pure life for the impure life, there can be no salvation from death. The apostle argues this out in Hebrews, and declares that "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of the many," and thus "put away sins by a sacrifice of himself" for as many as look for his coming the second time.

Thus you see how the scarlet line runs through all the ages, and how by faith, as many as will, may lay hold on the true token, and come out of death alive. Oh, may you all see these true things in their beauty, and in the story of Rahab, learn how she became the wife of Salmon, to send her blood into the royal Davidic line, down the stream of time and life unto Mary the mother of Jesus, the Son of God and Son of Man! Thus blood [life] saves. Thus Jesus Christ came into the world not to condemn, but to save it; not to call the righteous, but sinners unto himself.

No wonder the publicans and sinners looked for and bound the scarlet token of his love and life in the window of their hearts. So to-night, dear sin-

ner, you can have the true token. It came by the Word of God and by the blood of Christ, and enters every life by the operation of the Holy Spirit, who believes and confesses that Jesus is the Son of God.

THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses [sins] unto them.—II. Cor. V., 19.

The transaction recorded in the eighth chapter of St. John's Gospel serves to illustrate this text, and to a consideration of that I invite your attention. The event transpired in the latter part of the second year of our Lord's ministerial work and life. He was in Jerusalem, and it was the last day, that great day of the feast. All the pious people of the land were gathered there. The feast had lasted seven days, and the eighth day was the last and the greatest day. On that day Jesus stood in the temple, and cried, "If *any* man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly [heart] shall flow rivers of *living* water." Many men of many minds heard this marvellous discourse; many widely different conclusions were formed and expressed. Some said, "Surely this must be the Christ." Others said, "Of a truth this is that prophet." But some said, "Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?" So there was great division on account of him. In the crowd there

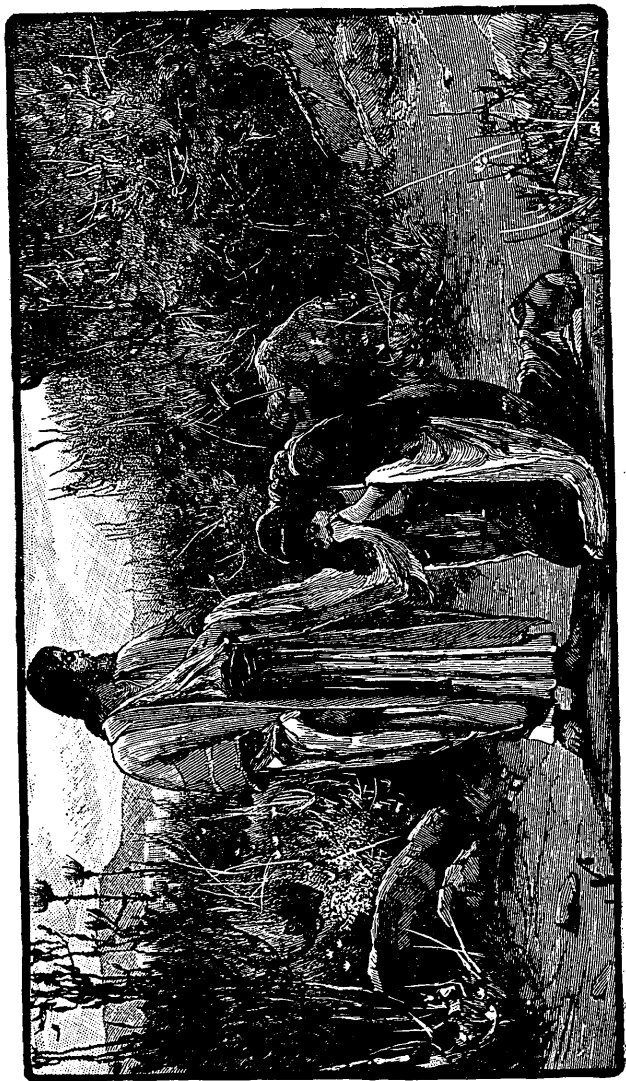


THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

stood a band of temple police who had been ordered by the Sanhedrin court to arrest him. This court was composed of seventy learned judges, with jurisdiction over civil and ecclesiastical affairs. The officers listened to the beautiful and wonderful words of life, and were so charmed and awed that they went back to the court without having made any effort "to lay hands on him."

When the rulers and Pharisees saw them coming without him, they were highly indignant, and said unto them, "Why have ye not brought him?" They could only stammer out, "Never man spake like this man." This alarmed the judges, and they answered, "Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or Pharisees believed on him? But this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed." Then Nicodemus, one of the judges, saith unto them, "Doth our law judge any one before it gives him a hearing, and knoweth what he doeth?" This reveals a friend and defender where none was anticipated; but the other judges turned upon him fiercely, and said, "Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." This is but an epitome of what was said in the wrangle, and so fierce and bitter were their feelings toward Jesus, that the session of the court broke up in confusion, and "every man went out unto his own house; but Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives."

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Saviour and mine went out to the Mount of Olives for the night! The Son of Man had not where to lay his head. The foxes had their holes, the birds their nests, and his enemies their houses. Let's look into this a little, if we can. We ought to try and put ourselves in his place, and imagine how he felt, and what he thought. How all this play of passion, the rage of envy and pride, and whirl of contention must have appeared unto him! Let me tell you, the best I can, who he is. Before this earth was formed, when it was yet in the mind of God; before God spake it into existence, and brought it through its formative and adorning periods, this same Jesus was the Word, and was with God, and was God, and by him and for him all created things were made. He is the owner of the earth and Lord over all. The men and the women who live on it breathe his air, drink his water, eat his bread, and live and have their being by his will. Even the men who were maligning him, and seeking judicially to condemn him to death, and who went out every man unto his own house, while he went out to the Mount of Olives, held their official positions in Moses' seat by his authority.

How can we know or tell what God has done "to reconcile the world unto himself," if we do not apprehend the facts, and realize the situation in which the Lord Jesus was placed while here in human guise? He came joyfully down from the glory-circled throne, and took our cursed and dying nature

upon him ; he took not the form, or nature, of the angels, but the habit of the Adamic man, who, as a consequence of sin, is a dying creature, until dead. To save this man, who has become an enemy of God, and reconcile him unto God, Jesus is in the world, and has taken his likeness, to be his kinsman, and have the right to redeem him, and then persuade him, if possible, to become reconciled unto God. The sinner is wont to think that God is angry with him. That is the greatest mistake imaginable. It is the lie Satan sows in the human mind. On the contrary, God loves the sinner, and was "in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto men their sins." It is not God who has to be reconciled, but man the sinner. "But," say you, "are there not passages which represent God as being angry with men?" Yes ; but that is so because in no other way, in primitive ages, could a sense of justice be conveyed to the minds of men. It is like we say of the sun, "Lo, the sun sets," or "Lo, the sun rises" ; yet the sun never sets and never rises. So, while it is true that God smites *sin*, he loves the sinner, and does not smite *him* ; but, above all things, he wants to separate him from sin, which stings and kills.

Now, Christ was on the earth in our own nature and tongue to make God known unto us in his true nature and loving heart, and to show us that *he* is *not* imputing the sinner's sins unto him, but doing all he can to *save him from them*. All we see of

God's true nature is revealed in Jesus. Yet how poorly we understand him! We look at the power Jesus put forth; we dwell sometimes on the beautiful words, the wondrous life he lived, so pure and holy; we shrink from the insults he bore and the agony he endured; we look at him on the cross, and our hearts melt within us; we behold his resurrection in awe, and we gaze in rapture on his ascension back to Heaven. But do we ever pause to consider what it cost the Lord Jesus to deny himself, to be in such lowly disguise, to restrain himself? Oh, to have all power in Heaven and earth, and only put forth the little power he did here and there! To be able to create worlds, and yet wait on sinners, and endure their contradictions and malicious insults; to be mocked and scoffed and thorn-crowned by them! Oh! this was the waiting time. Any soldier will tell you that in battle the waiting time is the hardest of all—to stand or lie, inactive, when musket and cannon-balls are flying, and death and destruction are on every hand. This may afford you some faint idea of what Jesus had to bear. Only here and there could he put forth his hand to heal and bless poor sin-sick humanity; manifesting just enough power to show that God is good; just enough in its volume to convince men and women that God loves and does not hate them. Suppose he had put forth power to such an extent that not a man could have been found to betray, to arrest, to buffet, to scourge and

crucify him? Ah me ! with no crown of thorns and no cross we all would have perished in our sins for evermore. There then would have been no resurrection from the dead, and no Open Door by which, if any man enters in, he shall be saved.

Now, the men who so persistently and maliciously persecuted him were not of the common people ; they were not the avowed sinners, but the educated, refined, religious, ruling classes—the scribes, the elders and the Pharisees. The chief ones were men in authority. They sat in the seat of Moses ; they were exceedingly self-righteous. They pretended to do it all by the authority of Moses, and for the sake of morals and religion ! When Jesus came preaching that the kingdom of Heaven was at hand, not having obtained any license from them, and ignoring their authority, they saw in him only a rival teacher and a dangerous reformer. His doctrines were too spiritual for them, and his morality too pure, and, being unable to confute him before the public, despising public sentiment as accursed, they determined to crush him by their authority. When he threw a light along the pathway of life that revealed them as whited sepulchres outside but rotten inside, they became his implacable enemies. The same thing occurs to this day. When the Sword of the Spirit is handled by a true preacher, and the Light shining in reveals unhealthy moral or spiritual conditions, men and women go away blaming the preacher for it. This is done in blindness,

instead of getting mad at Satan, who is the author of all the mischief.

When the rulers of the Sanhedrin and the crowds in the city dispersed that night, Jesus and his apostles went out to the Mount of Olives. He is asleep there, in the open air, contented and peaceful, for it is his meat and drink to do the will of him who sent him. In all these things he rejoiced. When he saw the malignancy of the human heart he called unto God, and said, "My Father, the hour *is* coming when the Son of Man shall be glorified." Ah! none of you can know what *that* means. It is too deep to be told. Do you not, also, remember that when the traitor Judas went out to betray him he told him to do it quickly, and when he was gone shouted as no one ever shouted before on this earth, "Now is mine hour come! Now is the Son of Man glorified!" Now, brethren, while the Lord is asleep over there on the Mount, these Jewish leaders and rulers scheme and plot. They say to one another, "We must get rid of this disturber very soon, or he'll turn everybody against us and expel us." They had been trying every way; they had set trap after trap to entrap him, but he had skilfully escaped them all. The rulers called into council the chief of the temple police and the detectives. At length some ingenious officer came forward with this scheme: he said, "I have a new idea. You know everywhere he has gone the sinners and the publicans have been received by him.

He gives out that he is The Sinner's Friend. That's the reason the people run after him so ; that's what draws them unto him. Now, we must get him on some law point, and we'll make him go back on the sinners, or we'll put him in opposition to the law, and condemn him for being against Moses." They had the law courts in their hand, and the authority to interpret and enforce the law against him the moment they could show that he had in any wise violated it. So this man said, "I'll take a police force, and go over the town to-night until I find, and can take a woman in the very act of adultery; and then to-morrow, when he comes into the temple to teach, we'll drag the woman before him, and see what he shall say should be done with her. All the rulers shall go in with us, and put the case before him. If he should say, 'Let her be stoned, according to the law,' the people can be persuaded and turned against him ; but if he should defy the law, you can deal with him for that, and legally put him to death."

This was deemed a splendid scheme, and one that could hardly fail of putting Jesus to shame, or involve him in the meshes of the law. So the officers were sent out, and they scoured the city for a victim. They knew where to go, and it was not long until they had found a poor creature, and they imprisoned her for the night. The guilty man—they paid no attention to him.

Now, early in the morning Jesus came over to the city, and was soon seated on the rostrum in the

temple, discoursing unto a great crowd, eager to see and to hear the Wonder-worker. His gracious manner pleased them all, and his charming words fell like soothing music on their ears. I wish you could have heard him. All at once there was a rustling of robes, and, by the great door of the temple, in came the learned judges of the Sanhedrin, in their magnificent vestments, accompanied by a squad of police, who were dragging a woman along with them. Poor creature! she would rather have been torn, limb by limb, than to be brought before the crowd in that sacred place. There she is, an open and a confessed sinner of the worst type. There is no denying it. They had come prepared to fix her offense upon her. They have a case against her that cannot be got over. She cannot say, "You have no witnesses to prove this charge," for she had been "taken in the very act."

O friends, if Jesus can find a way to save this woman, he can save me and you. A young man, now living in Jersey City, who was converted under my ministry four years ago, recently wrote me that he hoped I would have this sermon reported and printed. He could not remember the text, but he said, "It is where the Lord saved himself, saved the woman and saved me." Praise the Lord! That's Jesus, and he is the Saviour of sinners. When I show you how he saved himself and the woman, and conserved the law at the same time, you'll see that he is the Friend you need.

Now, the rulers and Pharisees do not care about the adultery of the woman ; she is only a foil in their wicked hands. It is not adultery, but Jesus they wish to condemn. They only seek a legal pretext to put him to death. The woman is a victim of their malice, as well as the victim of some man's passion and her own.

As the rulers came forward, in due order, everybody fell back, and they arranged themselves in a semicircle before Jesus, as he sat on the platform, with the woman in the midst. Now, Moses in the law says that such a one shall be stoned to death. But Jesus invites sinners to come unto him, and drink and live. But will he be able to make his word good now? There was never such a critical situation before. If he shall in anywise contravene or seek to annul the law, they will arrest and condemn him. The crowd gave way, falling back to the right and to the left, and the rulers were received with the greatest respect, as they arranged themselves in order, beginning with the eldest, that is, according to rank, like the etiquette observed in European courts. Then they began to say unto Jesus, " Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act ; now, in the law Moses commanded us to stone such ; what, then, sayest thou ? " Jesus listened, looking at them, as if in astonishment, and then he looked upon the woman in pity, and stooped down and began to write on the ground with his finger, just as though he had not heard, or

had not understood what had been said unto him. Then there was surprise and confusion among the rulers and Pharisees. They did not know what to think or what to make out of his strange conduct. They even felt some alarm over it. He seemed to be either unconcerned or unconscious of the imposing array of dignity and authority before him. They looked at each other inquiringly, then at him, and at the woman ; and then they began again, and said the same thing over ; but Jesus kept on writing, writing on the ground. Ah, ye learned judges, it is the handwriting of God. So they had to say for the third time, "Master, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses says that such shall be stoned, but"—here, right in the midst of the conundrum, Jesus, picked himself up, and looking majestically and indignantly all along the line of the woman's accusers, he said unto them, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And again he stooped down and began again to write on the ground.

That was a centre shot. They were dumbfounded, and knew in their hearts that not a man among them could cast a stone at her on such a condition. He had overthrown them with a point of law. They are foist with their own petard. And so, shamefaced and humiliated, they began at the eldest, and marched out in silence, while Jesus was writing on the ground. The police followed, leaving the woman to herself. Not a word was spoken, and there the

woman stands. She is free to go, too, but she does not want to. She knows she has found a Friend indeed, and a mighty Deliverer. He has saved her. He has saved himself. The accusers are gone; Moses is gone, and Christ reigns supreme in her soul. O men and women, *that* is salvation. That means everything for earth and Heaven.

Then the Lord picked himself up again, and he saw he was alone, with the woman in the midst. O to be thus alone with Jesus! When he saw none but the woman, he said unto her, "Woman, where are thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" And she said, "No man, Lord." And Jesus said unto her—blessed words!—"Neither do I condemn thee; go thy way; and from henceforth sin no more."

O brethren, did you ever hear anything as gracious as that? God in Christ is reconciling the woman unto himself, not imputing her sins unto her. Under the law she must die, but Christ bids her live, and sin no more. That's what Jesus did for the woman. And since he saved himself and saved her from the penalty of the law, he saves me also, because I believe on him. Her sin undergirds every other sin. That's the reason the Pharisees dragged her before him. But she had found out something while facing death—she found Jesus to be "Lord" and "Saviour." She spoke just three words, no more, "Lord, no man." She called him "Lord."

Here is Heaven come down our souls to greet ; for whosoever finds out that Jesus is Lord, and confesses it with his mouth before men, is confessed by him also before God in Heaven. Over this confession comes the healing and the cleansing power. When he had rendered it impossible for man to condemn her, when no man could execute the law against her but Jesus alone, he said unto her, "Neither do I condemn thee ; go in peace and sin no more." This is the peace of Heaven, the peace of God, which "passeth all understanding." But the law is not broken. I have shown you how he conserved the law by revealing unto the administrators of it that they were not clean-hearted enough to execute it. He came not to destroy, but to fulfill the law, and "he is the end of the law"—in that sense—"for righteousness to every one that believeth." The law slays on account of sin, but the Spirit maketh alive. So when the executioner of the law comes to take the guilty one's life, Jesus provides a way of escape. How can the law of Moses be executed when there is no one who can first cast a stone? "He that is without sin among you, let him *first* cast a stone at her."

St. Paul says that "righteousness was imputed unto Abraham, because he believed God," and that "it shall be imputed unto us also, who believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offenses [sins], and was raised again for our justification."

So Christ settled the sin question for the woman. She came into the temple a sinner and a prisoner; she went out free and a saint—a child of the King. She would now rather be torn asunder than to sin again. She saw that Jesus is Lord. Every one who “seeth” that “hath eternal life” bestowed, and “*shall not* come into condemnation.” Now she lives. O friends, what a Saviour!

I want to show you to-night that the Lord's compassion is as great as his power; for if he would speak pardon and life unto that poor guilty woman, and send her on her way in peace unto Heaven, with her name written in the Book of Life, will he not freely send any of us on our way rejoicing if we find out who he is, and confess him Lord before men?

The Scripture says that she stood there alone with Jesus. Oh, blessed place to be, and hear him say, “Neither do I condemn thee.” She had faced death for hours, but his *word* had put her accusers and her judges to flight. She weeps and sighs no more. All gloom and clouds and doubts have been swept from her sky. Truly she has passed out of death into life, and out of self into Christ. Oh, the glory dawning for her, and the love shed abroad in her heart! She now has too much to think of, and too much joy to dwell in, ever to be a dissolute woman again. She is free from sin, and Christ reigns. The day-star of eternal life has arisen in her soul. She knows her Lord and he knows her. She is “reconciled unto God” evermore.

In her sin and in her reconciliation she is a type unto all the world. By our God in Christ Jesus, delivering his own Son for our offenses, and raising him from the dead for our justification, surely all men should believe in his power and willingness to save sinners. He gave his pure and sinless life against my sinful life and ruined nature. What a witness this is of God's pity and love, and of Christ's obedience and compassion! But that is only one part of the witness. The warning is here also. If any man shall deny him who bore our sins and was raised from the dead for our justification, him will Jesus deny also before God in Heaven. O sinner, come unto him, and drink and live.

THE RULER'S DAUGHTER.

Matt. IX., 18-23; Mark V., 36; Luke VIII., 41-56.

This sermon was delivered during a furious rain storm, but the din did not in anywise seem to disturb the preacher, who, after reading, "Be not afraid, only believe," and naming the above Scriptures, said:

These are extraordinary words to fall from the lips of any one on an occasion like this. They were spoken by the Wonder-worker of Galilee before a multitude, unto a man whose only daughter had just expired. They came to the crushed heart of a father who had just heard his servants say, "Thy daughter is dead." As soon as the Lord Jesus heard that word spoken, he said unto that father, "Be not afraid, only believe, and she shall be made whole." No other person on earth could have said this. Only this true Servant of man and true Son of God could have said those blessed words. It would have been perfectly absurd and ridiculous, an impious mockery, for a mere man to say unto that father, "Thy daughter is dead: but be not afraid; only believe in me, and all will be well."

Brethren, let us examine the circumstances surrounding this case. Now, this man, whose name

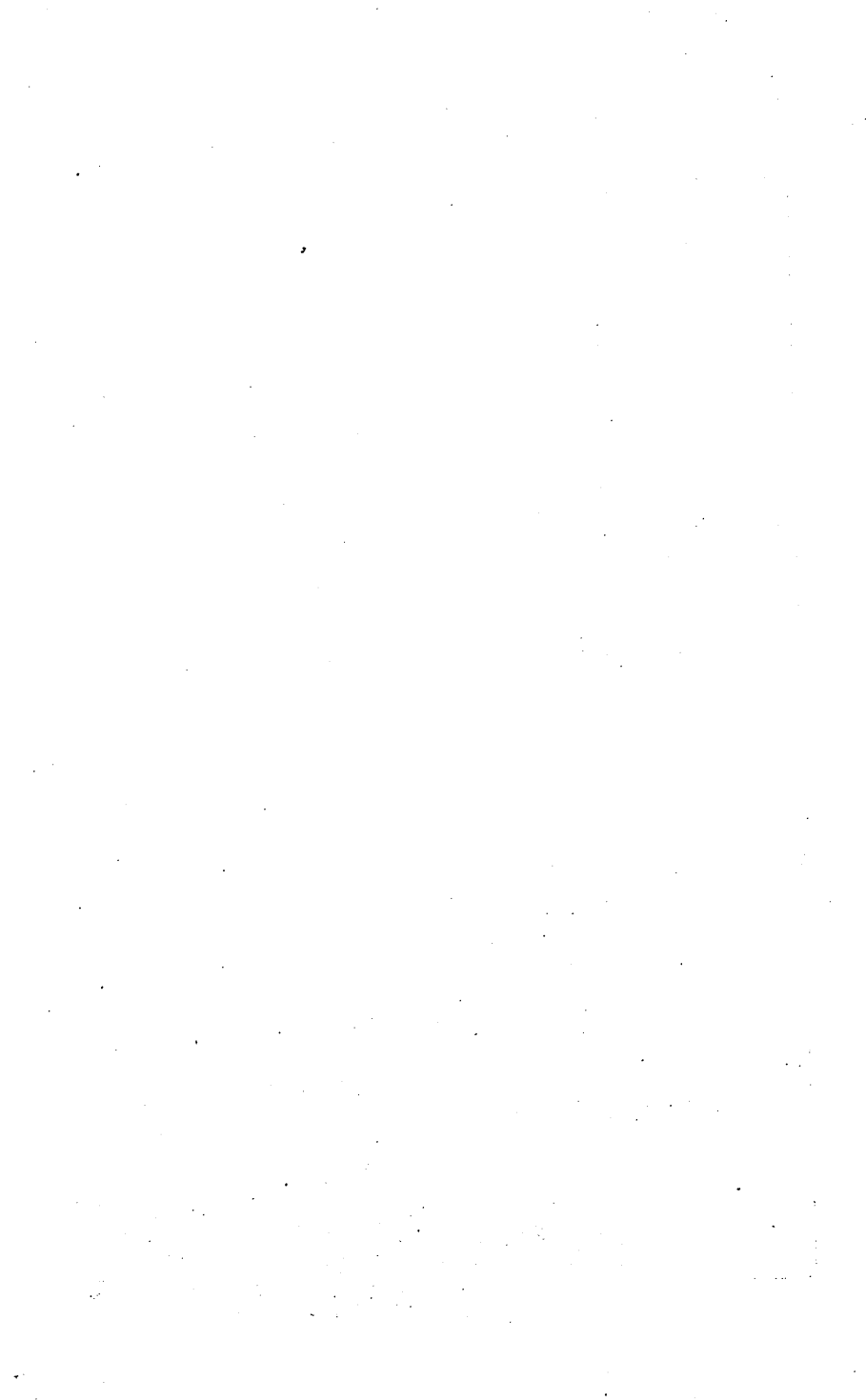
was Jairus, was a person of distinction. He occupied a high social and ecclesiastical position in the city of Capernaum. He was the ruler of the synagogue, the Jewish church in that city. His only daughter, twelve years of age, just blooming into womanhood, the pride of his heart and the joy of his life, had been stricken by some fatal disease. He employed the best physicians in Capernaum. He did everything the heart of a father could think of to save his only daughter. She was not alone his "only" daughter, but his "only" child. Ah! you have no idea how much *that* had to do with her resurrection from the dead.

All the doctors came who were called, and gave her any quantity of medicine, dose after dose, but she grew continually worse. When it became evident that she was at the point of death, and no human skill could save her, they concluded to send for Jesus.

Now this man Jairus belonged to the Pharisee sect, which was making such bitter war on Christ. He had said many a hard and cruel thing about him. Perhaps the daughter knew more about Jesus than her father. She doubtless had often heard the words of life and beauty from his lips, and the mother had listened, too, and been a witness of the wondrous deeds he was doing in the land. Men were harder to be convinced then than they are now. They had less general education, and were, especially the religiously educated, possessed of



CHRIST RAISING JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.



more prejudice and superstition. Christ had a far harder time in preaching the gospel than any man has to-day. He was freely called a wine-bibber and a glutton. They said, in his face, that he had a devil, and charged that he cast out evil spirits by the power of Beelzebub. Jairus belonged to the sect which said all these things. But, I show you to-night, that none of these things stood in the way of his coming unto Jesus, so far as the Lord was concerned. What a Servant was he unto all!

When this man came unto him in his deep distress, the Lord said not a word unto him about the way he had talked and abused him. He did not throw his sins up to him. He never throws a sinner's sins up to him. As soon as Jairus came into the presence of the Master he threw himself at his feet, and implored him greatly, saying, "My little daughter lieth at the point of death. I pray thee come, and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed, and she shall live." That was enough. The Master's heart was moved with compassion, and he said unto him, "I will go with you forthwith." That is the Lord Jesus Christ, brethren.

Now I want to describe unto you certain events that transpired the day before this. We can never understand any great event without being made familiar with all the surroundings. The second day preceding the wonders of this day, Jesus had stood in the prow of a ship, and preached the "Word" unto a great multitude on the shore of Galilee, in

front of Capernaum. At the close of the day he dismissed the multitude, and said unto his disciples, "Let's go over to the other side." And "they took him as he was." I think it must have been in the night time, and as they floated along on the blue waters of Galilee, he, being weary, fell asleep on a pillow, in the hinder part of the ship. The moon was shedding her soft light upon the still waters, and Christ was asleep. His disciples were deeply absorbed in whispered tales of the wonders their Master had wrought so lavishly, when, out of a clear sky, came down a devil's storm; the calm sea was tossed into an angry deep, almost instantly. They did all they could to right the ship and outride the storm, but no human skill availed, and they were about to perish. Then they ran rudely to the sleeping Saviour, and, shaking him, said unto him, "Master, master, carest *thou* not that *we* perish?"

The storm without had aroused an alarm storm within them. Ah, brethren, know you not this in your own experience? If all was right within, the outward storm would not create alarm. "Perfect love casteth out all fear." Being filled with great fear, these men fled to Christ and aroused him. He arose calmly, undisturbed by the din and danger, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still." Instantly there were two calms—the sea was at peace, and their hearts were also still again. On landing in the morning, the man possessed with a legion of evil spirits was released

and clothed in his right mind. Returning from this excursion, and these wondrous experiences, the Lord and his disciples had just landed in the midst of a great multitude, which had come out to see him, when Jairus, the ruler of the synagogue, came running up to him, forgetting his dignity and all sense of pride. Ah! there are times when we all can forget all sense of pride. There, in the presence of the multitude, the ruler fell at his feet, and, in heart-rending tones, implored him to come and lay his hands on his daughter, saying, "And she shall live." These last words were words of faith. All the rest of his speech was as nothing; but when he said, "And she shall live," Jesus said, "I will go." He answered that call of faith. Never yet has any one called on him thus but he answered the call. He always answers, yes. And now they are going along together—Jesus and Jairus! The throng was so eager that they followed, and pressed in on him, jostling and treading on each other, to catch a nearer view. Brethren, we can form no idea how intensely eager they were to see the Wonder-worker. Suppose you had lived in Galilee, and had been a witness of any one of the miracles he wrought by his word, how you would have pressed forward to see the glory of his eyes! Well, the most favored of them had but an imperfect view of him. They did not begin to have the view of him and his wondrous deeds that you and I may have. We have a wider scope to look over, and we can go

with him and see and live in all the things he said and did, if we will. O! I live with him in these scenes; I am with him there.

Now, as he was walking on toward Capernaum, with Jairus by his side, oh, how anxious the father was! Can you not understand this man's condition? I can. Let me illustrate. When I was a ten-year-old boy, living in the mountains of Virginia, one dark night my mother was taken suddenly ill. Father, who was a physician, was four miles away, visiting a patient. At length mother said, "My son, I don't like to send you out alone in the dark night, but I am afraid I am dying, and you must take a horse and go for your father." She knew I was afraid of the dark. But oh! when my mother might be dying, fear of *that* overcame all other fears, and I rode out into the dark of that night as no other boy ever rode.

Oh, this father's heart! Put yourself in his place. "Oh, Jairus," said the mother, "you must go, for our daughter is dying; but, husband, don't stay one minute longer than you can help. Oh, if our child *should* die while you are gone!" So here he is, getting back so slowly, but bringing the Wonder-worker along with him. The Lord had not stopped to say, "Why, you are the man who has been slandering me so." That's not God's way, and Jesus talks and acts as God. They go on slowly, but together. There's a world of consolation in that, brother.

The Lord himself is in no hurry. His mind is undisturbed. I never knew him to be in a hurry. But as they passed along amid the dense and eager throng something happened. The very air was pregnant with great events to come. Suddenly the Lord stood still, and, looking inquiringly all around, cried out, "Who touched me?" Everybody fell back, amazed, and some were alarmed. Jairus was greatly vexed, and filled with fresh apprehension over the delay. Turning about, the Lord again cried out, "Who touched me?" But no one came forward to acknowledge the deed. At this point Peter thought he could throw a little light on the subject, so he said, "Master, why do you say, 'Who touched me?' seeing so many have touched you in the press of this great crowd?" But Jesus was not to be deceived or turned aside, so he kept on saying, "Who touched me, for I perceive power has gone out from me?" Just then a woman came from out the crowd and threw herself at his feet, and confessed all. She told him how wretched she had been with a blood issue for twelve years, how she had spent all she had on many physicians, and grew worse and worse. "Then," said she, "I heard things concerning you, and I said in my heart, if I can but get to him, and touch the hem of his garment, I shall be made whole, and it was I who touched thee, and lo! I am sound and well again." Jesus, looking benignantly down upon her, said unto her, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath

made thee whole ; go in peace." Just as he thus dismissed her, and sent her on her way full of health, peace and joy, certain persons came running up to Jairus, and said unto him, "Thy daughter is dead : why troublest thou the Master any further?" Poor man ! he was tugging at the Master, trying to get him away. How he did wish that poor woman had never been born, or that Jesus had rejected her ! Brethren, how would you feel and act in such a case ? Are you ready for these things ? So his servants had to say again, "Why troublest thou the Master any further ? Thy daughter *is* dead."

What did Jesus do ? Did he say, "Well, Jairus, I am sorry, but it's no use to go any further ; nothing more can be done" ? No, he didn't say anything of the kind. But this is what he did say : "Fear not, only believe, and she shall be made whole."

Now the multitude can go no further. There are places where the crowd can never go. He commanded them to remain behind. He chose Peter, James and John, and they five go on. Jairus kept close by his side. Never had such words of comfort been spoken by mortal lips. What would it have been for Generals Washington, Bonaparte, Lee or Grant to have said that ? You see at once that none but God manifest in human flesh would have dared to say, "Be not afraid ; you have commenced to trust me, trust me still." O brother, sister, never give up your trust in Christ Jesus ! Have you been in deep sorrow or deep distress ; have you

suffered malignment and slander, or persecution? It is a trying time, but it is also the testing time, to prove whether you are true to the Lord or not. "Be not afraid, only believe." Think well! The trial will come to every one of you. Trust him; commence now, this very hour. Trust him in little things, and then you will not be afraid when greater trials come. Once a little girl was dying. Her father said, "Daughter, are you afraid to die?" "No, papa," she said, "I am not afraid; Jesus is the Rock on which I lean." "But, my child, you tremble so." "Yes, papa, but the Rock does not tremble." Brethren, the Rock never trembles! Jesus never fails, he never falters. So he said unto Jairus, "Have faith; don't go back on me." Men and brethren, let's never go back on the Lord.

And now they have reached the house, and found a great crowd gathered—relatives, friends and neighbors—wailing and making a great clamor, after the fashion of the day. When Jesus arrived this is what greeted his eyes: And when he was come in, he said unto them, "Why weep ye, and make this ado? Weep not, she is not dead, but sleepeth." And they left off wailing, and "laughed him to scorn, knowing she *was* dead." Oh, I am glad they did laugh him to scorn! It was providential that they did. They said, "We know that she is dead. Did we not see her die, and did we not lay her out and dress her in her burial shroud? And *you* say she is not dead! That only confirms

what some of us thought of you, that you are a pretender." This, and many things beside, they hissed at him. It was hard on the dear Lord. It was one of the many things he endured for me. O Lord, this is thy cross. Yet it needs must be so, that the natural death of that child should be established by this malignant and scoffing testimony. He said not a word, but he put them all out. There are places the scoffer and unbeliever can never enter. Let this be a warning unto all the world.

Then he took the father and the mother and the three disciples with him, and entered into the death chamber, where the maid was lying. I want you to see how many entered there. There were Jesus, Peter, John and James, and the father and the mother—six—and no more; but she that was asleep, and yet dead, made *seven*; this is God's number for mercy, perfection and life.

They are all standing around the bed where lies the maid, and the silence is very profound. How still and lifeless she is, and yet Jesus says that she is only asleep. She is truly dead to every one but him. He uses no galvanic battery, there is no laying on of hands, no administering of nostrums, but he stands quietly before her. He takes her by the hand, and says, "Maid, I say unto thee, arise," and "straightway she arose and began to walk." And they were so astonished and amazed that they were afraid of their own dear daughter! So he com-

manded them to give her something to eat, and when they saw her eat they were afraid no more. They embraced her, and wept for joy.

Now, brethren and friends, look at this miracle a moment. If Jesus had not been the Son of God, the divine person he represented himself to be, he would never have entered that house; if he had not known that he possessed power over death, the best way out would have been to say unto Jairus, when his servants came and announced the death of his daughter, "I am sorry for you, sorry I did not get to your house in time; I might have been able to save your child, but it is all over now." But confident in his Almighty power, he goes right on in the face of death, undismayed and unmoved, into the presence of the dead. No being could stand where he did and say unto the dead, "Maid, arise," if not conscious that his voice would bring her spirit back into her dead body and reanimate it. He took no chances. He of all beings who ever trod this earth could least afford to take any risk of failure. He put forth no effort. He spoke a word. He said, "Maid, arise," and she arose. O men and women, what a demonstration of divine power is this! By his "word" she is alive again. It is by his "word" we confess him unto salvation. By his "word" we then live in him. By his "word" we shall be raised from the dead, also. In the resurrection of this maid we have a demonstration of our own resurrection, confirmed again and again in the resurrec-

tion of the widow's son, and in the resurrection of Lazarus, after being dead and buried four days. Blessed as is all this, we are not left to the three-fold resurrection of others, even at the word of our Lord ; but he did for us what no mind can conceive or tongue speak of. There is no sound, nor sign, nor language to tell it. Oh ! by his own word he laid down his own life for us, and took it up again the morning of the third day, "even as he had said." Now, I would not have you see the *power* of Christ over and above his *compassion*. Power is one thing, compassion is a different thing altogether. There are storms and earthquakes—that is power. But here is compassion *and* power. Jesus had compassion on this man, because his only daughter was dying, or dead ; he was not seeking an opportunity to raise the dead. He went along because Jairus said, "Master, my *only* daughter lieth at the point of death." It was the cry of the father's heart for his *only* child, which brought Jesus to the rescue, and the cry of your heart, sinner, will bring him to your rescue. Will you not come unto him now ?

THE LORD IN A THREE-FOLD ASPECT.

Beloved, I will read the Scripture which reveals the three-fold aspect in which the Lord presents himself unto the world. First, he presents himself as *Healer* ; next, as *Consoler* ; and thirdly, as *Saviour*. The first two relate to the earthly life and condition of mankind, and the third relates to the Heavenly nature and life in the everlasting kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the sixteenth verse of the eighth chapter of Matthew, we find this :

“ When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils : and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.”

In healing the sick and afflicted, he made them sound and well forever from whatsoever disease they had. Every act of this kind was a demonstration of divine benevolence to tell us that God is gracious, and to convince us that he always tells the truth, while Satan is vicious and never tells the truth when a lie will do.

He healed them with his word. By it, he cast out evil spirits. That is the instrument he used. He gave no other medicine but his touch—his word. It was not at all necessary that he should see or touch

them. It was only necessary that he should "send his word." This is in fulfilment of David's and Isaiah's Messianic prophecy, which said that when the true Shepherd should come, he would heal the afflicted with his word, and David said he would even "send his word." To the nobleman from Capernaum, Jesus said, "Go thy way, thy son liveth." And lo, the next day as the anxious father drew nigh unto Capernaum, his servants came out to meet him, shouting, "Thy son liveth!" The father inquired of them, and said, "At what hour did he begin to revive?" and they said unto him, "Yesterday, at the seventh hour the fever left him." So the father knew it was the same hour in which Jesus said, "Thy son liveth." No wonder he "himself and his whole house believed."

Around whom is it our love and admiration gathers and tarries the longest, outside our own family circle? Is it not around the skillful and humane family physician? Therefore, it is as the *Healer* that Jesus first proves himself to be the friend of humanity. He is the only Physician who healed all his cases, and yet never presented any bill, and would not accept any compensation. This ministration is the kindest and lowliest of all, and yet the most Heavenly.

Brethren, you must see this or you never can prove to the sinner that Jesus Christ is good; that God is good, and the friend of sinful men. The sinner is afraid of God. When he comes into a

mission or a church, he sits on the back seat. He ever wants to get as far away from the pulpit as he can. Sinful men are afraid of God and of God's ministers. The reason is this: the devil has poisoned their minds, and made them to believe that all their afflictions and sorrows are from the hand of God, and that he is angry with them every hour just because they *are* weak and sinful.

The criminal's first impulse is to run away or hide when he sees a police officer. He does not want to be arrested and punished for his offenses. I do not blame an offender for running or hiding. If I were one I should do the same thing. Now the sinner thinks God is a severe and austere criminal judge, and looks on Jesus Christ as an arresting officer, to drag him before the great judge of all the earth. All this is the devil's lie about God. On the contrary, as a matter of fact and truth, *God so loved* the world that he sent his own Son to heal, to console and to save sinners. Then he does not *so* hate or *so* despise them. God is love. God is good. He gives life, health and peace. He never afflicts, but *heals*, all who come unto him.

When Jesus began to manifest, to make God known unto us in his true nature and character, he *healed* all manner of *disease*, and cast out *evil* spirits. Does this not prove that God loves the sinner? When we see Jesus "going about doing *good*," not doing *evil*; when we see him healing all who were diseased or possessed, without money and without

price, what an object lesson it is unto all the world, proving that God is good, loving and kind! How willing and abundantly able he showed himself to be!

That is the first thing Jesus did. Never was an afflicted one brought unto him, no matter how poor, or lowly, or sinful, but he healed him or her instantly. There was no examination of tongue or pulse. No prescription to be filled or medicine to be taken. By his *word* he healed them all; not partially, but entirely; not gradually, but instantly. On one occasion the multitude of sick was so great that he and his disciples did not have time so much as to eat for three days. And this wondrous work went on and on for over three years. He went about doing good. He never lost a case. All his patients were made sound and well.

Truly this shows that he is a friend indeed. Oh, *such* a friend as we all need! Surely God does not hate sinful men and women. Surely Jesus told the truth, and nothing but the truth, when he said, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever should *believe in him*, should not *perish*, but should have life eternal." "Then," you inquire, "if all affliction, and sorrow, and death is not from God, whence is it?" You readily see that it is not God's work, or else it would be God on earth in the person of his Son, come down from Heaven to work against himself. God on earth destroying what God in Heaven had caused. You

cannot conceive of God doing that—working against himself. Jesus said, “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work . . . The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do ; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” John v., 17 and 19. And again he said, “My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” John iv., 34.

But he was undoing the work of some one. Surely it was the work of an enemy. If I should go into a gallery, and see the pictures marred and scarred, I would know that it was the work of an enemy. I would not need to be told that. If I should come into this chapel and find the books torn and the benches broken and scattered, I would know that no friend of God or religion had done it. So, when I see humanity scarred and marred, suffering and dying, until dead, I know it is the work of an enemy. Now, it is easy to see that every time Jesus Christ cast out an evil spirit or healed any manner of disease, or raised the dead, he was destroying the work of an enemy of man and of God. I have shown you that it could not, possibly, be the work of God, and therefore, it must have been the work of an enemy of God, as well as of man. Now, the enemy is the devil. To prove that he is a liar in making men believe that his malicious work is God's, Christ began his ministerial work by healing all manner of disease, and by casting out *evil* spirits. Take the word “evil,” and add a “d” to it, and you will have

the name of the author of all the mischief in the world. He it is who "hath the power" of sickness, death and hell. It is to destroy his works, and finally the devil himself, that Jesus became manifest in our nature. Thus he is our *Healer*.

JESUS AS CONSOLER.

Now, I pass from this to show you that Jesus is also our *Consoler* in sorrow's or grief's lonely hour. One may not be immediately sick of any disease of the body, and yet be in the deepest distress. I have betimes, in the past, suffered more mental or spiritual anguish in an hour, than in a day and a month of physical sickness; and you have also, or if you have not, it will yet come to you. I have known what it is to need the Divine Consoler. I want to show you that this is what Jesus is. Oh, may you need *him*, and need *him* this very hour!

In St. Luke's Gospel, seventh chapter, the eleventh to the fifteenth verse, inclusive, we read that Jesus and his disciples, and a great multitude following him, came unto a city called Nain. "Now as he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and much people of the city was with her. And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, 'Weep not.' And he came and touched the coffin, and they that bare him stood still. And he said, 'Young man, I say unto thee, arise.' And he that was dead sat up,

and began to speak. And he delivered him unto his mother. And there came a great fear on all, and they glorified God."

Was ever there *such* a Consoler seen before? Oh, wondrous is his compassion and his power! This came to pass in broad daylight, in the presence of two multitudes: one following the only Son of God into, and the other carrying the dead and only son of the widow out of the City of Nain. The man was her only son, and only hope and support. See how deep her grief, how lonely her sorrow. Now, when the Lord saw her sad plight, when he knew her *only son* was dead, and she a widow too, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, "Weep not, weep no more."

Ah, me! *He* was an "only son," too. Brethren, do you think we begin to understand that? Have you ever sat down in meditation on this? Well, I have. Did he not remember, when he saw the widow weeping over her only son dead, the parting which took place in Heaven between God and his only begotten Son, now nearly thirty-two years ago, as we count time? The "only son" question is too deep, and I forbear.

Here is this poor widowed mother, her widowhood rendered desolate beyond description by the death of her only son, shot down by an unseen arrow from the Evil One, as her husband had been years before. All her neighbors and friends are gathered about this march to the tomb. That is all

mortal friends and neighbors can do. But, O praise the Lord, here is the Son of Man! And he is quickly moved with compassion, not with indifference or useless sympathy, but with divine compassion. "And *he* said unto her, weep not." But can she weep no more? See how wondrously the Consoler did. He touched the bier, and said unto him that was dead, "Young man, *I* say unto thee, arise!" How strange and presumptuous is this! How profound the silence all around! See, how calm and majestic is the mien of the Consoler. How benignant his countenance, and how still the voice in which he speaks and commands the dead man to arise! But how *can* the dead hear thy voice, thou prophet of Galilee? Yet lo, and behold, the dead man arose, sat up, and began to talk! "And Jesus took him by the hand and gave him to his mother." Is he not truly the *Consoler*?

Do you wonder that "they all glorified God," being filled with fear and awe? And oh, the mother's heart, as she again folded her risen son to her breast! What a life that young man lived again, and what a marvel was he! Never did he forget the voice of him who awoke him from the dead, and called his spirit back into its house of clay. How adorable the *Consoler* of all this!

JESUS AS SAVIOUR.

I now want to set him before you as Saviour. He is Healer and Consoler only that he may be received

as Saviour of all who believe on his name. In all the other he stoops to win our confidence, that he may be enabled to raise us out of our ruin, into *his* imperishable nature.

Eleventh chapter of Matthew, and the last three verses. Here he says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and *I* will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." This is the Lord's own proclamation. It contains fifty-two words, no more and no less; a word for every week in the year. It is both a loving invitation and a gentle command, universal in its application and Heavenly in its provisions. It embraces "all" in its call, and abundantly saves and adorns as many as come unto him. The voice is entrancing; the terms are gracious; the promises precious. Never was so much contained in so few words. We marvel almost as much at that which is *implied* as over that which is *expressed*. Let's look into it a little.

There are two kings, two kingdoms and two services contrasted—the service of Satan and the service of God. The Lord also extends two invitations, and tenders a double "rest." The first is a *given rest*; and is offered to the sinner just because he *is* heavily burdened and laden with sin and sorrow and death. He is invited to "come" as he is. To him Jesus saith, "Come unto me and *I* will give you rest";

that is, deliverance from Satan's yoke and rest from weariness of soul. Great as is this deliverance, it is negative relief—simple freedom from the burden of sin and the sorrow of death. So the Lord does not stop here. He does not free the sinner and leave him alone in unknown regions, a prey to anxious fears and longings after better things.

The second calling is unto service in his yoke, and to fellowship with him. Satan's yoke means slavery, heavy and crushing burdens, under the lash of an austere and hard-hearted king; but Christ's yoke implies two, walking and working together. So the Lord's second calling is the most blessed, and is the saint's. To those who have "come" unto him and who have received the *given rest*, he saith, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye *shall* find rest unto your souls."

Ah, the promise is divinely fair, and the association Heavenly. How charming a lover Jesus is! Hear him pleading—"for I am meek [sweet] and lowly in heart, and ye *shall* find rest unto your souls?" Truly this is my God's answer to all the highest and noblest longings of my soul. In his school, in his church, himself in me, and I in him, I *learn of him*, and become *like him*. Is this not truly salvation full and free? Oh, take thou the *given rest*, and live with him, and thou shalt FIND REST, rest unto thy soul, and be at last with him in his everlasting kingdom, forever blest.

When he speaks of the burden and labor of Satan's yoke, it is only to let you know, sinner, that he understands your woe, and sympathizes with you. Thus he gives you a reason for his gracious invitation to come unto him, and be liberated by his own word. It is not come *to* me, but "Come *unto* Me." The difference is as wide as the sea. He invites you to share with him his best—his Heavenly life and rest. His yoke he offers thee. That implies two together, side by side, he and you forevermore. That you may know his service is good and pleasant, he adds, "for MY yoke is easy and MY burden is light." His "yoke" is gaining Heaven, and his "burden" is love's own.

O brethren, if we can only get the gospel of Christ before sinners in its three-fold aspect, setting forth the Lord Jesus Christ as Healer, as Consoier, and as Saviour, they would gladly come unto him and confess him before men, and be confessed by him, also, before God in Heaven. Oh, the men and the women, and the children, going up and down in the highways and byways of this sad-eyed world, seeking rest, and yet afraid of the Lord! If they only knew what I have told you to-night of Jesus the Healer, of Jesus the Consoler, of Jesus the Saviour, don't you know that would woo and win them unto him who is the Door, the Way, the Light, and the Life eternal?

“WHEN HE SAW THEIR FAITH.”

Mark II., 1-12; Luke V., 18; Matthew IX., 1.

The Lord had been out in the region round about Capernaum for several days, and had just returned into the city. His reputation was now so great that everywhere the people heard of him, they gathered about him in multitudes; so that on this occasion he had no sooner returned than it was noised abroad in Capernaum that he was in Simon's house.

Now, while he had been abroad preaching, learned deputations of men came up from Jerusalem, and the cities of Judea and Galilee, and were gathered together in Capernaum for the purpose of investigating him, and inquiring into his doctrines. But they came not to learn of him, not to see whether he is truly the Messiah; but they came to investigate, to see if there is not some legal method by which they could put a stop to the stir he is making in the land. They seek to put the Wonder-worker down, who has never consulted them, nor obtained any license to teach; who has not even taken a course of study from any of the great scholars. And yet it is reported that he speaks as one having authority. He is preaching just what he believes. Then the way he has won the hearts of the people, and the gathering multitudes about



NAZARETH.



him, makes him too prominent and too powerful to go unchallenged. There is no telling what he may take it into his head to do.

O brethren, what a difference there is between speaking *with* authority and *by* authority. These men gathered there are first-class scholars, learned expounders of the law of Moses and all traditions of the elders. They have legal jurisdiction over all matters of religion and morals. Some of them were members of the great Sanhedrin court at Jerusalem.

Have you not heard preachers who industriously quoted this or that opinion or saying of Campbell, Luther, Wesley, or Calvin? That's preaching *by* authority. But, brethren, when you know the truth, you do not need to cite Campbell or Calvin, or anybody else. Jesus Christ knew the truth; wherefore he spake as never man spake. Oh, how it charmed the heart of every sincere listener! Every one seemed to realize that an extraordinary personage was in the land—that a great prophet had arisen.

Then he called himself by such a strange name. Did you notice what he calls himself in this transaction? He calls himself "Son of Man." Now, how strange this is. What a strange name for a man to give himself. What would you think if some one should come into this city and register his name at the hotel as "Son of Man"? And if you should get into conversation with him, and he should say, "My name is Son of Man"—what would you not think? Well, that is what Jesus called himself in

his public addresses. If any one said unto him, "Who are you?" he answered, "I am Son of Man." He didn't give any very clear explanation of this, but left every one to his wits or spiritual perception to find out what it signifies or who he really is. If the doctors of divinity had not been spiritually blind, if they had understood the types and allegories of the Old Scriptures, they would have known at once why he called himself "Son of Man." That designation alone should have pointed him out as the Messiah; for the prophets of old had predicted that the Son of Man should come. And he came unto his own, and his own knew him not. Well, these learned gentlemen were there with him in Simon Peter's house. I think they stand together there, on the left hand of the Lord; his apostles are on the right, and the people fill the house, the doors and the windows. All are very quiet, and every one is in great expectation. It is generally understood why the rulers are present in such array. The multitude is on the Master's side. The Lord arose and began to discourse. This is an extraordinary occasion. Probably for the first time he faces such a learned body of men. He understands fully that they are seeking a pretext on which to silence and condemn him. So Jesus preached the "Word"; take notice, he preached the Word. He had no other Scripture but Moses and the prophets. He quoted a text from some of the Messianic predictions, and he unfolded its true meaning unto them, that

they might see, in the Scripture, that the kingdom of Heaven is at hand; but he said not a word about the King of this kingdom. He is so reverential in dealing with the Scripture, and so logical and lucid and bold in his expositions, that they are charmed and yet alarmed. They feel that he has more to say, and has purposely left them in a mystified and conjectural frame of mind. In fact, he spoke of himself all the time as the Word, but they failed to see it—it was past their comprehension. They thought he was troubled with big conceptions without being able to define them, or else he was unwilling to do so. Just at this point in his discourse there was a sudden and unlooked-for interruption. A strange sight was seen. Right through the roof there came down into the midst a man lying on a bed, and he was put down just before the Master. It created quite a stir. From an earthly standpoint this would seem to be very annoying. When one is before a large audience, expounding things of deep interest and great importance, what an impertinence to have an interruption like this in the midst of your discourse! But this diversion made no such impression on Jesus. On the contrary, when he looked up and saw what it was, he seemed to be pleased at the sight *he* saw.

I want you to consider how he turned, unmoved, from his profound discourse, unto the men who interrupted him. Praise the Lord! He was never astonished or disturbed. - Outward circumstances had

no power over him. I have studied his life for many years, reading between and below the lines ; but I have never known him to be disturbed by fear or alarm. The din of this world never disturbed his composure, except when he was moved with compassion. I will describe the circumstances connected with this unanticipated and extraordinary interruption. There is another view to be taken. Oh, that it may have its counterpart in your experience ! We must see how all this "came to pass." It didn't happen, but is ordained. A man is passing rapidly along the streets of Capernaum ; he has heard that Jesus is at Simon's house, and he wants to get in while there may yet be standing-room. He is one of his disciples, and he wants to see him. But as he is hurrying along, he sees a man lying on his bed at his door, shaking. He is a palsied man. He cannot keep still. He is shaking, shaking ; every nerve-centre in his body is disturbed. You can have no idea how this poor man suffered. Now when this disciple of Jesus saw him, he stopped and said unto him, "See here, I know a man who would heal you, if you could only get to him." The palsied man said, "Never mind me ; there is no help for me ; nobody can cure me ; my case is a hopeless one ; I never expect to be well again." But the disciple said, "If you could only get to him ; I wish I knew how to get you there. Do you see my eyes ? Well, I was born blind. I heard about him ; how he was healing all manner of disease,

and giving sight to the blind, and I placed myself on the highway, and when he passed by I cried out, 'Thou son of David, have mercy on me, have mercy on me'; and he stood still, and said unto me, 'Receive thy sight,' and instantly I had eyes to see, and the first object to dawn on my sight was Jesus, the Wonder-worker."

The palsied man said, "Well, that is truly marvellous; let me look at your eyes again." Just then there came along another disciple of the Lord, and he said, "If you could only come down to Simon's house; the Master is there now, and he would heal you. I was lame for years, and he healed me by *a word*." He was no sooner through speaking than two other disciples, passing by, saw what was going on by the man's bedside, and they halted and told how they had been healed, using many words of testimony, which I need not take time to repeat; but will just leave it to your imagination. Can you not see the whole scene?

The palsied man was overwhelmed. He did not know what to think or say. There were just four witnesses, no more, no less; just as we have four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, to witness the fullness of the compassion, mercy, power and love of God in Christ Jesus, even as the river of Eden afterwards divided into four rivers.

These four healed and saved men are united in their testimony and praise. They said, "It is all right; he won't charge anything; he never sends in

a bill, and won't accept anything for any healing he does. Now, if you'll just consent to go." But the man said, "How can *I* get there? I can't walk." And they said, "Oh, never mind that; we are just four, and we'll carry you." The Scripture says that "he was borne of four." Ah, they came along there in the very nick of Providence. I can see the whole transaction—can't you? He gives a hesitating, doubtful assent. That's enough for the four; and two at either end of his little bed, and they are carrying him along the streets down to Simon's house, where Jesus is preaching the Word. When they had arrived an unexpected difficulty arose. The crowd is very great around the door. Satan always sees what obstacles he can put in the way when you try to bring a suffering one unto the Lord. He will hedge you off if he can. The crowd at the door and windows was very dense, blocking the way; it was impossible for them to pass through. So the leader of the four said, "Ladies and gentlemen, won't you please be kind enough to stand aside a little, and let us pass in with this poor sick man?" You would think that the sight of the four carrying the palsied man on this bed would have caused them all to quickly stand aside, but they would not, and did not move an inch. Alas, for the inhumanity of the unregenerate man! What a witness to the ruin of man.

But the four disciples were courageous—Christ was formed within them. They were not to be

baffled in their attempt to do good. The poor man on the bed was in despair, but faith in Jesus reigned in the breasts of the four. Would to God there were such disciples to-day in all the cities of the whole world ! We have such, indeed, but they are few in number. The world is not even worthy of them. These four were not to be defeated. Jesus was too near at hand ; so they put the sick man down, and cast about to see what should be done. It came like a flash. They made a mathematical calculation. They ascertained exactly where the Master stood. Then the leader, he of the glorious eyes, said unto his fellows, " Now we'll get a ladder and a pick, and we'll go up on the roof and take up the tiling, just over where the Master stands, and when we have opened a place big enough we'll bring him up, and let him down before the Master by the use of ropes." This inspired them ; and when all was ready they took up the bed, two in front and two behind. Carefully and tenderly they eased him up and up, so as not to jar the poor man. Their hearts were tender, their nerves were steady and strong. It didn't take them long. In that country then the houses were generally only one story, and the roofs nearly flat. All is ready now. The ropes have been attached to the four corners of the bed, and there is a believing disciple to each rope. And now they begin to slowly and cautiously let him down, plying the rope out hand over hand as they kneel on the roof and look down on the

descending man. I see it all. How the muscles stand out on their bare arms, and how their faces shine ! Oh, the sight is glorious ! O men and women, if you have the love of God and man warm in your hearts, it will make you brave, true and glad !

Ah, the poor man on that bed—what a type is he of the utter helplessness of all flesh without Christ Jesus ! Poor fellow ! he is dazed, and he did not have one bit of faith. He had barely consented to let them carry him, because they were so certain and anxious. He thought within himself, “Well, I am bound to die in a day or two any way, and I may as well die one time as another. If I should die on the way what difference would it make ?” And as he goes down, down, his eyes are closed. The movement is so gentle and easy that he scarcely realizes what is being done ; but now, at last, he is just passing down before the Master’s eye ; and, looking up at that instant, Jesus saw the four disciples on the roof. He understood it all, at a glance. Then it was—oh, glad day and hour !—that “he saw their faith.” They had made the right calculation. The palsied man is now on the floor, in the right place, before the Master’s face. And they are looking down to see what he will do. They are so glad and proud that all obstacles have been overcome, and that they have got the dying man in the presence of the Master. Ah, when the Lord looked up and “saw their faith,” he, too, was glad. You

ought to have seen the glow on his face. In the same instant he thought of the learned men standing there, and his resolution was taken to speak words that never before had fallen from the lips of any one on the earth. So "when he saw their faith"—he could not see it until they had given this striking manifestation of it—he said unto the man sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee."

This was a very strange speech to make on such an occasion. It amazed them all. The four men up on the roof looked at each other in wonder, and within themselves said, "Why, is he not going to heal the man?" But the scribes and rulers were still more deeply moved, and that with fury and horror, for they reasoned within themselves, saying, "Why does this man speak blasphemies? Who but God only can forgive sins?" Not only the angry expression on their faces, but their very thought was read by the Lord. "For immediately he had perceived, in his spirit, that they thus reasoned within themselves." His words had produced the effect he had intended, and so he said unto them, "Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' or to say, 'Arise, take up thy bed and walk'?"

Now, the scribes had not spoken a word, but he had read their thought, and they now knew he had. Thus he had given them a proof of his divine calling. It is true, dear friends, that "God only can

forgive sins"; and if this is not God speaking, it is blasphemy; and these learned men are members of the ecclesiastical court which holds its sessions in Jerusalem, and they have the law and power in their hands to put a man to death for blasphemy. Thus he made an issue at once with them, that had death in it for him, but life eternal for every one who believes on his name.

• He put a question to them, and he puts it to all the world, "Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, 'Thy sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Arise, take up thy bed and walk'?" I put it to you to-night. If Jesus is a pretender he will simply say, "Thy sins are forgiven," for who can assuredly say that the man's sins were not forgiven; there could be no tangible disproof of it. But if he should say unto him, "Arise and walk," and he does not "arise," there is absolute, tangible evidence of failure, and of false pretension to divine power! So the Master said, "But that you *may know* that the Son of Man *hath power on earth to forgive sins*"—turning and looking down on the man sick of the palsy, but not touching him—"I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed and go thy way unto thy house." Straightway he arose, picked up his bed, put it on his shoulder, and walked out before them all. The crowd divided right and left, to let him pass out, for the multitude was greatly amazed, and glorified God, saying, "We have seen strange things to-day"; "Never saw we anything on this

fashion before." The man himself went out, shouting and glorifying God along the streets.

This man knew in himself that his sins were forgiven. He had spiritual knowledge of the spiritual power in the words, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee"; but, to make those words good to the eye and mind of all; that all may know the words spoken in the first place are Heavenly words, Christ says, "Arise, take up thy bed and walk." He said and did these wondrous things for all ages, and for the men of every clime. That which is divine has no limitation of time or place or race. Oh, as he looked up, and saw their faith, may he look down and see your faith to-night! Four men, four disciples, brought all this to pass. I want you to mark well the human agency in these wondrous things through *faith in Christ*. "When the Lord *saw their faith* he said unto the sick of the palsy, "Son, thy sins are forgiven." Now, "their faith" was in the demonstration *they* gave of it. No one else could do that for them. This is the first time on earth those words were ever spoken. Four men of Galilee, four disciples, by their God-like act toward their neighbor, filled with earnest zeal and unflinching faith in the Lord, called forth the word of health, and salvation also. Go thou and do likewise.

This man was not healed because of *his* faith, but because of *their faith*. But it was not on their account he first said, "Thy sins are forgiven."

There were two reasons for this saying ; one is fundamental, the other circumstantial. The circumstantial was the immediate occasion. It was the presence of the scribes and rulers. If they had not been there he would only have said, "Arise and walk." But these men are theologians, and hold false religious conceptions, and they must have a lesson, and they got it. The fundamental reason is this: Sin lies at the base, and is the cause of all disease. But I do not have time to dwell upon that now.

The compassion and power of Christ and the element of faith in his four disciples—O brethren, these are the things I want you to believe in. Here is a demonstration of practical work for us all in the blessed example of the four. Would to God that Jesus might be able to look down on our faith! Not on the faith which says, "I would like to," or "I'll try." Try is a poor faith. I know any number who "try," but that is not the action of a living faith. Oh, for the faith that lays hold on men and women in the broad road to ruin and everlasting destruction! O men and women, pray by the word of action! Scale the roof and tear up the tiling. May the lesson of this transaction sink so deep into your lives that you shall henceforth seek, find and *bring in* the lost ones.

“SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.”

Jonah i., 17; ii., 1-10; Matt. xii., 40.

“Salvation is of the Lord.”

This is the testimony of a man who was brought to this confession by the saddest and most bitter experience that ever fell to the lot of any being on this earth, except one. This man was a prophet; but he was not speaking prophetically when he gave this testimony. He was speaking experimentally. He was telling what a Saviour *he* had found the Lord to be in his own sad experience. He had preached this truth theoretically, and in a sort of fashion believed it; but he now had an experience which brought it as a living factor into his life.

So, now to compare the two transactions which I have read you to-night; one as mirrored in the old picture-book, and the other as it fell from the lips of our Saviour prophetically, and was, later on, literally fulfilled in his own person.

Jonah had been preaching in Israel, and had made some of them very mad, and others very sad. He denounced their idolatry and licentiousness. Would to God I had a thousand sinners here to-night, that I might make some mad and others sad. Jesus says, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword.”

Now, brethren, he does not mean a sword made of steel, but the sword of divine truth; and it is "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." O men and women, receive the lesson to-night. Let not the sign of Jonah in the whale's belly, and of the Son of Man in the heart of the earth, be unto you an idle tale. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. We are all responsible for the gospel we hear and the opportunities God brings unto us.

I say that this man Jonah had been a successful preacher in Israel. He was becoming very well satisfied with the results. There was a general turning away from idolatry, and their minds were beginning to be concentrated on the Lord. O my God, what a scene of disloyalty there is in Louisville town to-night!

In the midst of this revival in Israel, when Jonah entertained high hopes of national deliverance, the Lord came unto him and said, "You are doing a very good work here, but I want you to go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness is come up before me."

Jonah was offended at this. It did not suit him at all. It conflicted with all *his* notions and plans. You remember how it was on the night of the betrayal? Peter said unto the Lord, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. Likewise said they all." I do

not know, with the light I have, how they dared to say that, for it was an utter contradiction of what the Lord had just declared would come to pass that very night. So Jonah had an opinion, a "theological" notion. I tell you, when men get that, the devil plays with them, as a cat with a mouse. He had a theological opinion, but his theology did not keep him from hearing the voice of the Lord. After he had pondered over it awhile, he said unto himself, "I will not go."

His reason for not going was this: we often like to be complimentary unto the Lord; he argued thus: "If *I* go up there, and preach to those wicked Ninevehites, they'll be sure to repent, and my God is a gracious God, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and he'll forgive them, and let them live. So, I'll not go, but just let them go on until destruction overtakes them." That was his reason. He wanted them to be destroyed, because they were enemies of his country. It was not because he was afraid to go, or the way was so long. There never was a braver man than Jonah. But he was a man with a theological opinion, and willing to argue until his eyebrows should drop off. He even dared to dispute with the Lord. "The idea of *me* going to preach to the Ninevehites, the natural enemies of Israel, and save *them* from destruction! I'll run away, first; I'll go to Joppa, and take passage on a vessel, cross the Mediterranean, and go to Tarshish. I have long wanted

to pay a visit to that country, anyhow." The Lord had said, "Go northeast;" and he said, "I'll go southwest." He got himself ready, and traveled forty miles down the coast to Joppa. Now, how it could enter his mind that he could run away from the Lord, I cannot explain. Probably, he only thought to separate himself from his duty. It was an inexplicable delusion, and it comes, I fear, over the minds of many in this day and generation. You have been very tired, sometimes, or a neighbor comes in, or you wanted to go visiting about the time you should have come to this chapel, and you have let these things separate you from your service unto the Lord! Look out, brother, sister! That is the Jonah idea.

At Joppa he found a ship going to Tarshish. He paid the fare, and went *down into the hold*. He was an honest man, so he paid the fare before he hid himself. He acted as if he thought a detective was on his track. Though he was very daring, still he felt afraid. He wanted to be alone. He did not want to mix with the passengers or the crew. He did not feel like talking. He lay down in the hold of the ship, and directly he was fast asleep! Is it not really shocking that he could sleep in such circumstances! Well, on his way to Joppa, everything looked as usual. The sky was clear and glorious. The sea was as smooth as glass. The Lord had made no sign. He had heard no voice calling him back. Once on board the ship,

sailing further and further away from his native land, and also further away from wicked Nineveh, he began to feel pretty safe, and, being weary in body and mind, he slept. How long, I cannot tell; not long, however. For out of a clear sky a furious storm came down on the vessel—quite unlike the one that came down on the ship when Jesus lay asleep on a pillow; that was the devil's storm, but this is the Lord's. Here is a storm the Lord has sent, by a great wind that has tossed the sea into a tempest, upon his disobedient prophet:—*his* prophet, brethren; don't forget that. There is a young man who comes to this chapel, and gives his testimony, who is in jail to-night. I have no doubt in the world as to his conversion; but he is a disobedient saint, and he must suffer for it. Well, the storm continued to rage. The sailors are alarmed. They begin to lighten the ship by throwing the freight overboard, but nothing does any good. They are in imminent danger. They all begin to pray, every man unto his heathen god. Still the storm increases in its fury. Suddenly they think of the strange, venerable looking man, who came aboard at Joppa. "Wonder where he is," they said. But he was not to be seen, and so the shipmaster begins to search for him and finds him fast asleep in the hold. He shakes him, and cries unto him, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise and call on thy God, if so be he will think upon us that we perish not." The storm keeps on

increasing in fury. The sailors, being superstitious, said, "Come, let's cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us." And the lot fell on Jonah. Of course it did. It fell on the right man. The guilty soul is like a tall tree in a thunder storm—sure to be struck !

Dazed, and at first almost paralyzed, Jonah recovered himself a little. He then saw his runaway game was up. Now, when he first came aboard he had told some one that he is a Hebrew and a prophet of the Lord, and that the Lord his God had told him to go to Nineveh, and that he is going to Tarshish to get out of obeying him. And now, standing on the storm-lashed deck, he said unto them, "All this storm is come upon you on my account." Then they were exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, "Why hast thou done this? What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us?" And he said, "Take me up and cast me into the sea." He was willing to make the sacrifice. There was good in him. They said, "We do not want to do that; let's throw overboard some more of the freight." But it did no good. So they began to pray again, and this time they cried unto the Lord, and said, "God;" before they had said, "gods"; but now the prophet has brought them to call on the Lord. "We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish on this man's account." Still the storm raged, its fury increasing every moment. Jonah said, "There's no help for

it; you'll have to cast me into the sea; don't delay any longer, but be done with it." Thereupon they took him up and cast him overboard. Almost instantly the sea ceased its raging, and there was a great calm. The sailors and passengers were awe-struck, and solemnly offered a sacrifice unto the Lord. Thus while punishing his disobedient prophet, the Lord won many souls unto himself. See! how peaceful is the sea. The blue Mediterranean is as smooth as glass, and the sky is mirrored in its bosom.

But the Lord was caring for his disobedient prophet. The men about the ship were horrified to see a great fish swallow him the moment he fell headlong into the sea. Ah, brethren, he always takes care of his *own*, the best he can. The Lord had "prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah." And there it was, in the nick of providence and in the right position. God never misses his mark. The men cast Jonah overboard, and instantly the fish swallowed him. O brethren, what a place to be in! "My God!" he cried, "you have cast me out of thy sight." But he was again mistaken. Instead of perishing, instead of being drowned or crushed or smothered to death, he found himself still alive and breathing, but unable to move hand or foot. Thus, hour after hour passed. Confounded and surprised at his novel situation and marvellous preservation, oh, what reflections came into his mind! He could feel that the monster fish was

going deeper and deeper down into the sea, and the pressure was becoming almost intolerable; and yet he realized that the Lord was caring for him, and so he turned his face in the direction, as he thought, of the holy Mount of Zion, and cried unto the Lord for deliverance. The "Lord heard him in his holy temple," and he "spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." Then he shouted, "Salvation is of the Lord! for out of the belly of hell I cried, and thou didst hear *my* voice."

If ever any man needed "salvation," Jonah did. I tell you, brethren, when God starts out to give this world an object lesson, he gives one that cannot be counterfeited. The like of this had never been seen before, and will never be again.

There was a time in my life when I did not believe the story of Jonah and the whale, but I believe it now. But I say to the skeptic, if there is one present, you do not need to believe it in order to be saved. There are many things in the Bible which are not essential for the sinner to believe. The things he must believe are very few, but very grand. "Whosoever shall believe that Jesus is the Lord, and that God hath raised him from the dead, shall be saved."

I now know that the story of Jonah, three days and three nights in the whale's belly, is true. I know from history that there was no difficulty in the way, so far as the great fish was concerned. The

Hebrew terms, *tan* and *tannin*, are rendered dragon, whale, serpent, sea-monster. In Matt. xii., 40, *celos* is rendered "whale," but means also shark, seal, or any great fish of that class. The species of white shark, of the family *squalidæ*, is often thirty feet, and can easily swallow a man or a horse whole. Captain King, in his survey of Australia, testifies to this. Blumenthal says a whole horse has been found in this species of shark. Captain Basil Hall reports taking one that had a whole buffalo skin in him. The white shark is not uncommon in the Mediterranean Sea.

This transaction, though an actual occurrence as to Jonah, is an allegory unto us; one of those wonderful picture lessons written by the hand of God. Jonah is not himself a type of Christ, but his being three days and three nights in the whale's belly and coming out alive, without seeing corruption, was a type to show that the Son of Man should be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. It meant to teach the elect that in the fullness of time God manifest in flesh, in human nature, should himself go down into hell, and come out a mighty conqueror. The grave, in the Old Scripture, always means hell. In that Scripture no other hell is revealed. The other hell was not revealed until Christ came, and called it destruction by hell fire. It is also described as the "second death." I pray that every soul in this house shall escape that death.

As Jonah escaped the hell he was in, because he remembered the Lord and called on him, because he was his own prophet, so shall those who accept Jesus for Saviour be raised from the dead. Christ says, "I know my sheep, and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any creature pluck them out of my hand." Once a prophet, always a prophet; once a saint, always a saint; once born of the eternal seed of Christ Jesus, as eternal as God himself. Brethren, let's get into Christ now.

How this man Jonah suffered for his disobedience! After his deliverance he knew, and could affirm, that "salvation is of the Lord." Salvation means deliverance; it means more than human tongue can express. The Lord sent Jonah at once to Nineveh. "Arise," said he unto him, "go unto Nineveh, and preach the preaching *I* bid thee." This was the sermon he cried up and down in the streets of that great city: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be destroyed." They had all heard what the Lord had done to Jonah, and they concluded that if he would thus punish his own prophet for a disobedience like that, it was high time for them to quickly forsake their gross sins, and call on him mightily for mercy. So they all truly repented, and the Lord spared the city. He did precisely what Jonah had said he would do, and Jonah was very angry over it, and wanted to die; but the Lord,

by the sign of the gourd, convinced him that he was playing the role of fool again, and he gave it up.

In Matthew xii., 38-42, the Lord pointed out all this unto the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees, who were tauntingly asking him for "a sign from Heaven." The implication was that if he should show them such a sign they would believe on him. So he told them that they were wicked at heart, and belonged to an adulterous race, and declared that they should have no other sign but the sign of Jonah the Prophet. He told them plainly that they were a wicked and adulterous nation, far worse than the people of Nineveh, or those who lived in the days of Solomon; that the people then came from all parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and all Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, but a greater than Jonah is here, and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here, and yet ye repent not, but come asking for a sign from Heaven. Then he declared unto them that the sign of Jonah should be repeated in his own person; that God's last sign unto the world would be the Son of Man three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and yet alive again for evermore. We have had this prophecy fulfilled, and yet this town is full of just such persons as the Lord described that generation to be! I do not mean that this city is any worse than Chicago, Cincinnati, Berlin or Paris. But you know well that there are men and women, aye, one hundred thousand of them in this city,

who are in the broad way that leadeth to everlasting destruction. Here we sit to-night, very comfortably, and have made no very special effort, I fear, to get any number into this place, and yet the last sign has been given. Why, those scribes and Pharisees had no idea what the sign of Jonah meant for them. Ah, how little this wicked and adulterous generation understands or cares for the sign of the Son of Man three days and nights in the heart of the earth, even as Jonah was in the whale's belly!

Oh, if the scribes had only been able to read the handwriting of God in the sign of Jonah, they would not have persecuted Jesus, but they went about hounding him, until they impaled him on the Roman cross, and he lay in the heart of the earth. Under the dominion of the Wolf they go about to destroy him. They are the children of him that cometh but for to steal, to kill and destroy. O brethren, that wolf is Satan. He wants to drag you, sinner, down in the second death, and he will succeed unless you hear the voice of Jesus and enter in by the open Door.

Oh, what a marvellous manifestation of divine mercy and power is this, that Jesus Christ should lay down his life, make his bed in the grave, in hell, for three days and three nights, without seeing corruption, and then take it up again! That's the sign, brother, sister, the last sign the world shall ever see that is "unto salvation." O brethren, since sin is so destructive that God puts all this on his

own Son, that we should not perish, but should have eternal life through that Son, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?

If I could but tell you what God endured, what agony Jesus suffered, to rescue thy soul from hell! May your eyes be opened to see these things. Think of Jonah. Think of Christ. Do you wonder the Apostle Peter says, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Now, Jonah suffered for his own disobedience, but Christ suffered for us. It was his meat and drink to do his Father's will, and he was obedient even unto the death of the cross. On him, in Gethsemane, in one hour of dreadful agony, the sin and the sins of us all came down. "By his stripes are we healed." After that, do you wonder that Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." Do you wonder that he says, "Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven, but whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven." Do you now wonder that he says, "I am the Door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved." Or that the Apostle Paul declares, "This is the gospel which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be

saved." Indeed, "Salvation is of the Lord." O sinner, receive it to-night. God would not spare his own Son when he cried unto him in the garden of Gethsemane, "Oh, my Father, if it be possible take this cup from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." God looked on, and let him suffer. Brother, sister, are you going to hell over all that? Shall the devil get you after all the Lord has done to save you? Oh, salvation is of the Lord, and it is free unto all who are willing to confess him before men.





VISION OF THE HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS.

THE HOUSE NOT MADE WITH HANDS.

“For we know that if the earthly house of our bodily frame be dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal, in Heaven. . . Now he that hath wrought us for this very thing is God, who gave unto us the earnest of the Spirit.”—II. Cor. V., 1-5.

Dear brethren, I want to talk to you about “the house not made with hands.” All the houses we are acquainted with are made with hands. I have never seen a house that was not thus made. The Apostle Paul, who wrote this prophetic declaration, under divine inspiration, had never but once seen a house not made with hands; and then his Glimpse of Heaven was too brief and dazzling for him to describe the house he saw.

It is very difficult to describe something you have never seen, or only caught a dazzling glimpse of. It is almost impossible to create something out of nothing. But when one, under inspiration, succeeds in building something out of nothing, what a new creature it is! To get something out of the unseen world has been the ardent desire of every ardent mind. The language I have read is figurative. There is scarcely a word used in its plain, or literal sense. The Apostle Paul, like our Lord, when he would tell about the Heavenly things, uses that form of speech which is symbolic as well as literal in its meaning. We all have seen a house made with

hands, and know that it is a place of habitation. No house is made with hands but for some living being to dwell in. We have this idea of a house. We have seen and been in various kinds of houses. I have seen a house made of mud and grass, and I have seen houses that were made of brick, or stone, or marble, or a combination of these materials. Some were common, small and mean, and some were large and magnificent; but they were all made with hands. I understood this very well. I noticed also that these houses constantly needed repairing, and were being dissolved by the action and reaction of heat and cold, and by rain and storm. However, I have never yet seen a house *not* made with hands. I long to see one. So, "house" means a place of habitation—a dwelling-place. The word "tabernacle" means the same thing. But the word house has a larger application, and a higher meaning than that. It has a social, a political, a saintly and a spiritual meaning. We read of the nobleman, whose son was healed, that "all his house believed" on Jesus. Here "house" means family. This is the social meaning. Then we have "Houses of Parliament," the "two Houses of Congress," the Upper and the Lower Houses of the Legislature. This is the political use of the word. The Scriptures speak of "the household of faith." This is the ecclesiastical use of the term. But there is a higher and more spiritual meaning yet; and it is in that sense the Apostle uses it in the text, "Know ye not,

brethren, that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit?" This is the saintly use of the term, and is the first and lower sense in which it is used in the Scripture read. This is the earthly house, or body, in which the saint lives for a while, until it dissolves [dies], and then God provides "a house not made with hands," an eternal house, compacted in Heaven.

Hence we see that "the house not made with hands" is a figure to denote a spiritual body, and to instruct and comfort the saint. We observe and experience that these earthly bodies are decaying, day by day, and passing away, being dissolved, and the Apostle tells us to be of good comfort, for God hath provided that the tenant of the earthly tabernacle shall pass into "the house not made with hands," which is eternal, because not made of clay, with clay hands, but is fashioned in Heaven, of imperishable material.

If you go into an art gallery, and look at a fine picture, it is not the frame, nor the canvas, which entrances your mind and excites the liveliest sense of pleasure. Of course, you think of the accessories connected with it: there is the background and the perspective. Without these it would not be a picture, but they are not the picture. It is the life portrayed that is the picture. Nothing has ever been painted that did not have a living object or being in it. Every house [body] has a living thing in it. In every picture there is the Heavens and

the earth—the earth beneath and the Heavens above. It takes the union of the two worlds, the seen and the unseen, to make a picture, or a living creature, that shall abide. Perhaps you are thinking, “How about a landscape? Where is the living being here?” Why, in the grass and in the trees; in the sky and in the water. Even the artificial must have the signs of life.

So this body in which we live is a house, and when the Christ comes in, it is Heaven and earth united in “a new creature”—forming a “new man,” an “inner man,” the “hidden man.” It is not until this new creature arises from the “born again” that the house-body, made of clay, becomes “the temple of the Holy Spirit.” The “inner man” is the attraction. Now “the house not made with hands,” the body God compacts in Heaven, is for this new creature in the likeness of Christ Jesus. He is to pass into the Heavenly body when the earthly body dissolves. This applies only to those who have had Christ “formed within” them. There is no universal construction of Heavenly houses. “As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; as is the Heavenly, such are they also that are Heavenly. As we [the saints] have borne the image of the earthy, we shall bear the image of the Heavenly.” Only the Heavenly man shall live in the Heavenly house.

That which is natural is first, and then that which is spiritual. “The first man [Adam] is of earth,

earthly, but the second man [Christ] is of Heaven, Heavenly." Truly this new man should have a suitable body of God. Surely a grand man should live in a grand house, and the Heavenly man must yet live in a Heavenly house.

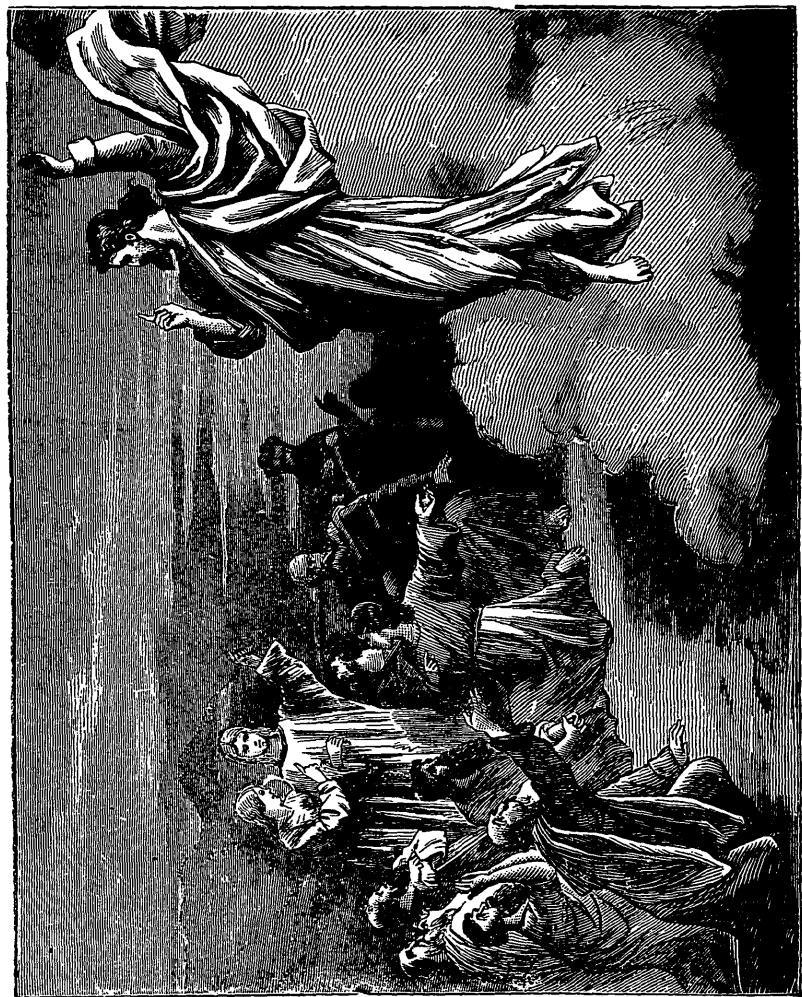
As Jesus was the God-man, so is every one who believes in him and confesses him. As he was here on the earth, so are we. It is God and human nature uniting to form the new man. For a time he continues to live in the earthly house, but when it dissolves he is assured of a better house awaiting him. Oh, may you all receive the Heavenly seed, which is Christ Jesus! The mind is a womb, in which, if that seed shall find a lodgement, the begetting is unto a new creature, even the man from Heaven. As the seed is eternal, so the creature born of it is also eternal; for like begets like, every seed after its own kind, or nature.

O brethren, to live in that Heavenly house, that celestial body, the incorruptible, the immortal body of God! Do you not long for it, and to be forever with Jesus in the land so bright and fair? Oh, that land [the earth], is to be the foot-stool of God; the paradise of all the worlds, a fit dwelling-place for the bodies not made with hands! Paul said he groaned in his earthly tabernacle, and longed to be clothed upon with the house from Heaven. When Jesus comes, when in the fullness of time, he shall quickly come to receive his own unto himself, what rejoicing there will be! Be ye comforted, ye saints

of the Lord, as ye witness the earthly house dissolving ; it is only the gateway into " the house not made with hands." Ah, when Jesus comes the saints will arise and receive their celestial body from the skies.

When Jesus expired on the cross, " he gave up his spirit," and it entered into Paradise. When the thief cried, and said, " Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Jesus replied, " This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Where Paradise is I cannot tell. But this I know, it is a blessed place of rest and peace. It is not Heaven, but it is the Garden of Heaven. Jesus went into Paradise and came back the morning of the third day, and re-entered his earthly house, and it revived again, and he came out in it to prove his resurrection from the dead. If he had come in his glorious body, his " house not made with hands," his disciples would not have known him. They could not even have looked upon him. Witness, the transfiguration and his appearance unto Saul. Forty days after he had returned from Paradise, and forty days after his resurrection from the dead, he ascended up into Heaven. So Heaven and Paradise are two different places ; though the greater includes the lesser.

Therefore, I believe, I do not teach this absolutely, that when the saint's earthly body dissolves, the inner man passes into Paradise, and abides there in perfect rest and peace until Jesus comes, and that



THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

the Heavenly body is not received until at that time. Paul declares, "For our citizenship is in Heaven, from whence we also look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body; that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." This change seems to be consequent upon, and takes place on the coming of our Lord from Heaven. The saints are exhorted "to come behind in no good gift waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ." They are "to live soberly, righteously and godly, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Then it appears that the saints who have passed out of the dissolved earthly body are not yet living in the house not made with hands. The same apostle declares, "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit [enter] the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." The sinner may well ponder over this. Yet it was not addressed to the sinner, but unto the saints who could not understand the resurrection of the dead. When Paul had explained that, another question arose. How shall the saints who are alive in the earthly body, when the Lord comes, get into the body not made with hands? Even the flesh body that has become the temple of the new man cannot get into the kingdom of God.

Wherefore, Paul made this revelation, "Behold, I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep [die],

but we [the saints] shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump" That is, the house made with hands shall be dissolved instantly, and be replaced by the house *not* made with hands.

On the night of his betrayal, when Jesus had made it plain that he was really about to leave his apostles, they began to be cast down, but he comforted them by showing them that it was for the best that he should return into Heaven. Said he, "In my Father's house there are many mansions [abiding places]. I go to prepare a place for you. I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, ye may be also." This is very comprehensive. I believe the "mansions" are "the bodies not made with hands." It means that he is in Heaven preparing a Heavenly body for every sinner who becomes a saint. This event is also connected with his coming again, "to receive" his saints "unto himself, that where he is, thereafter, they may be also."

I think I have shown you that the time of receiving the house from Heaven is when Jesus shall come again in great glory. By analogy it seems almost equally conclusive that when the saint's earthly body dissolves, the hidden man goes into Paradise, there to await the "last trump," and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds. This view of it is perfectly satisfactory to my mind. But whether this conception about Paradise is correct or incorrect, it has nothing to do with salvation from death and

hell. All that relates to *that* is perfectly plain and easily understood.

The only conception we can have of the saint's celestial body is inferential. Whatever ideal we may have of the Heavenly and the celestial ; whatever ideal we may be able to draw from the apostle's declaration, that the Lord will fashion the saint a body like unto his glorious body ; whatever view we can catch from the glory of Christ's transfiguration on the mountain, until his garments were whiter than snow, and his face did shine as the sun ; and whatever can be gained from contemplating the life and character of Jesus Christ, will only afford us a faint conception of the perfect beauty and adorable fitness of the house not made with hands.

Then what shall we not say of the God-man, who is to dwell eternally in that glorious body ? Oh, for the time when "what is mortal shall be swallowed up of life." "Wherefore we faint not ; but, though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day, for our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory ; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen ; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Ah, my Lord, never again will I look at the things which are temporal. The sight you set to my view is too glorious, but I will gaze and gaze until my vision can bear it.

“Now he that hath wrought *us* for this very thing is God, who *hath* given unto us the earnest of the Spirit.” As back of every miracle there stood the Wonder-worker, who is greater than all his mighty works, so the new man, who is to live in this Heavenly body, is greater than the house itself, and it is “God who hath wrought us for this very thing.” Ah, brethren, I believe we shall not know ourselves when our God in Christ gets through with us. And yet, we shall then know as we are known of him. Here are heights and depths into which I cannot venture. Do you wonder that the saints are “to judge the world,” and yet far more, are “to judge the angels.” When God works us out for this very thing, how unspeakable the glory.

In the meanwhile, we are not left disconsolate or alone in this present evil world, while the clay body is dissolving painfully, but “God *hath* given us the *earnest* of the Spirit.” This is the true token that all *shall* come to pass. The Spirit testifying with our spirit that we are sons of God even now. Truly, it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but when we see him, we shall be like him. An “earnest” is a pledge. If I give you an earnest you can produce it and remind yourself and me of the promise which it secures. The spirit of God abiding with us is the Heavenly witness that the things promised are true and glorious; it testifies continually, that the house not made with hands shall be ours. We can prove by our experience that what

he has told us of the Unseen is verily true. Have you ever felt the infinite power of the Holy Spirit comforting, quickening and inspiring? Then you are sure of the house not made with hands. That is a sign, also, that the new man has been formed within you.

The spirit is the medium of communication between Christ and the Believer; between God and the saint. It is the Holy Spirit which "sheds the love of God abroad in the heart" of the obedient saint. So we, who have been born again, have the true token as an earnest that when this earthly tabernacle dissolves, we have a glorious body in Heaven. O brethren, if there was no Heavenly house, no celestial abode, what a distracted world this would be! How glad I am that it is true and real about the Hidden Man, who is to live in the house not made with hands.

So, I pray that when death dissolves your house of clay, you may all be prepared to enter Paradise, and there await the trump of God, and the glorious coming of the Saviour Jesus Christ. Or, if Jesus shall come while you are yet absent from the Lord in the flesh, that you may be "changed in the twinkling of an eye," and be caught up in the air to meet him in the sky. Would to God that you all may hear his welcome and glad applaudit, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord." Amen.

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